THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

It has often been rightly remarked that a good part of scholarship consists in knowing the right questions to ask. It is even truer that the effective preacher is the preacher who knows what questions men are asking, and who has an honest and intelligent answer to them. Dr. A. J. Ebbutt has written a book entitled *The Life, the Question and the Answer*.[1] This book presents fifteen questions about the life of Jesus. Dr. Ebbutt asks such questions as: Did Jesus really live? Are the Gospel Records reliable? Why was Jesus baptized? Was Jesus' knowledge limited? Was Jesus sinless? Was Jesus' death necessary? Did Jesus really rise from the dead? Will Jesus come again? Clearly these are questions of the first importance, and clearly they are questions which will be asked and answered in every age of thinking men.

In seeking to indicate the character of a book like this it is necessary to select. We select Dr. Ebbutt's chapter on How was Jesus born? in order to show his method of approach and his general standpoint.

There are two answers to the question, How was Jesus born? The traditional answer is that Jesus was born of a virgin; the other answer is that 'Jesus was born of two human parents and so entered life through the gateway of all flesh.' Let us begin with the arguments for the Virgin Birth.

First, there are the *literary* arguments. (*a*) Both Luke and Matthew record the story of the Virgin Birth as an integral part of their narrative. (*b*) The two accounts are obviously independent, and yet they unmistakably agree on the main fact of the Virgin Birth. (*c*) The Semitic character of the narratives suggests their primitiveness, and, therefore, their genuineness. Jewish thought did not belittle marriage, and, if these accounts are not genuine, it must be explained how they arose.

Second, there are the *theological* arguments. (*a*) Such a miraculous birth was necessary, for it alone can explain the pre-existence of Jesus, His miracles, His sinlessness. Karl Barth has suggested that the coming of Jesus must be due *entirely* to the Divine will, which could not be so if He had a human father. (*b*) Such a birth is fitting; a unique being must have a unique entry into the world. (*c*) From very early times the Church has accepted the Virgin Birth. (*d*) It is a fulfilment of Is 7^{14}.

Third, the silence of other New Testament writers is no obstacle to belief. Mark relates only the public ministry of Jesus and calls Jesus 'Son of Mary' and not 'Son of Joseph.' Paul may not have known it; or, he may have known it, but the story could hardly be told during the lifetime of Mary. And it can be argued that Paul's doctrine of the pre-existence of the Son involves the Virgin Birth. John's Christology implies the Virgin Birth, and may indeed state it, if the singular—'who was born'—is read in Jn 1^{13}. The slanders of the Jewish opponents of Christianity—the story that Jesus was the illegitimate son of a Roman soldier—are evidence for the Virgin Birth.

Such, then, is a summary of the evidence for the Virgin Birth. What are the arguments against it?

There is the *documentary* evidence. (*a*) The Virgin Birth stories come from the least reliable and most legendary strata of the Gospel stories. They cannot be separated from 'such historic improbabilities as the angel choir, the visit of the Magi, the guiding star, Herod's slaughter of the infants, the flight of Joseph and Mary with Jesus into Egypt.' (*b*) The stories in Luke and Matthew are not consistent with themselves, for the genealogies imply that Joseph was the father of Jesus; and Mary's astonishment at finding Jesus in the Temple, when He was a boy, is unnatural after so wonderful a birth. (*c*) The birth stories conflict with the general outlook of the rest of the Gospel story. 'There is nothing in these three Gospels, except the birth stories, to indicate that the writers thought of Jesus other than a human being, in whom the Spirit of God became incarnate, and so enabled Him to achieve moral perfection, and render perfect obedience to God's will.'

[1] Ryerson Press, Toronto, and Bailey Bros. and Swinfen Ltd., London; 20s. net.

Second, there are the *theological* considerations. (*a*) The Virgin Birth would not ensure the sinlessness of Jesus. Sin would be transmitted just as well through one parent. A necessary consequence is the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In any event the whole conception implies far too physical a basis for holiness. (*b*) It may be that if we begin with the idea of the two natures in Christ the Virgin Birth helps, but if we view the Incarnation as the entry of the Spirit of God into human life, the Virgin birth is not necessary. (*c*) If we accept any kind of miraculous birth for Jesus, then the Incarnation becomes incomplete, and Jesus can no longer be our example or our High Priest. His temptations become unreal and He can no longer sympathize with us in our own struggle. (*d*) The Virgin Birth became a dogma, not so much to stress the *mode* of the birth of Jesus, as the *fact* of the birth of Jesus, as against Docetism. (*e*) The Virgin Birth does not really make the doctrine of the pre-existence of Jesus any easier. New Testament thought follows a progress—adoptionism, the Virgin Birth, and pre-existence.

Third, there are arguments *from silence*. (*a*) The Virgin Birth was not part of the *kerygma*, and was therefore not part of the essential preaching of the Early Church. (*b*) Jesus at no time gave any hint that His birth was exceptional, and at no time belittled family ties.

Fourth, there are certain *general considerations*. (*a*) Unless on a wrong view of prophecy and a mistranslation of the word *Almah*, Is 7^{14} is not a prophecy of the Virgin Birth. (*b*) The whole idea of the Virgin Birth is tied up with the idea of sex as evil (cf. Ps 51^{5}). This is an unchristian idea. (*c*) To demand a virgin birth is to say that God cannot work through the ordinary and the usual. (*d*) To argue that parthenogenesis can exist either in the lower physical order, or amongst human beings, is completely illogical; for, in effect, to use such an argument is to try to prove that Jesus is unique by proving that He is not unique!

How then shall we sum the matter up? It must be said that there is no room for dogmatism here. Neither the evidence for the Virgin Birth nor the evidence against it is conclusive. It must be remembered that we do not believe in Jesus because of the Virgin Birth; rather we agree that the Virgin Birth may be a fact because we believe in Jesus. It must be remembered that even if a thing is possible, it may still remain improbable, and that is the way with the Virgin Birth. It may well be that these stories are poetry more than they are history; and it is certain in any event 'that the truth in the story of the Virgin Birth is not biological but spiritual.'

This must be sufficient to show Dr. EBBUTT'S scholarly and scrupulously fair approach to the questions he poses. This is an altogether valuable book, for it provokes to thought, and it guides in the adventure of thought, without ever imposing its own preconceptions upon the reader.

Would it shock you to be told that Communism may act temporarily as an ally of the Christian Faith? Mr. Maurice B. RECKITT admits that some of his friends were shocked when he made a declaration to that effect. He explains what he meant by it in a paper on 'Man and Society' which is included in *Militant Here in Earth*.[1]

Communism as well as Christianity challenges the cynicism, the despair, the pleasure-loving spirit which are all too characteristic of life in the Western world to-day. In face of the fatalism or mere frivolity of contemporary attitudes, the Christian may rejoice with trembling to find that the Communist, though at variance with him as to the true meaning of man and society, is aligned with him in taking life seriously and speaking a word of hope. There are issues of some importance here which, with our author, we wish to explore.

Let us begin with another remark of his to the effect that Christians will never be of any service to the world if they allow themselves to be infected by its moods. The mood that he has particularly in mind is that of pessimism, which is no more legitimate for the Christian to-day than was the optimism of yesterday. It is clear now that there are depths of perversity in man which continually bring his noblest ideals to frustration. The doctrine of the Fall is one of the most acceptable parts of Christian teaching to-day, provided it is made clear that in essence the doctrine is not a contrast in terms of time between what man once was and what he now is. It is only so presented in the Bible because that is the clearest way of picturing the important truth that man is perfect in his nature as designed by God, but is wounded by his own self-centredness (his 'original sin,' which every child inherits) and his own wilfulness.

The social bearing of this is obvious. It makes all assumptions of inevitable progress and all longings for utopia as impossible in theory as they have been shown to be in the event. On the

[1] Longmans; 9s. 6d. net.

other hand—and this is not so obvious—it rules out the cynical valuation of man which sees him as the helpless sport of fate or fodder for the ambition of dictators. It is true that social achievement is a tender plant. Not liberty alone, but the most elementary social order too, can be maintained only at the price of eternal vigilance. These things can never be guaranteed. Yet there is an underlying persistence of man's true being despite the Fall, and though the health of a society can never be permanently assured, yet it may be real health so long as its aims are congruous with the purposes of God. In a fallen world social justice, industrial peace and international friendship can never be completely assured, yet we can do something about them, though to do it we shall never cease having to struggle, as Christians who know what the ultimate realities are.

The world to-day stands in need of an example of this kind of perseverance based on the true Christian hope, and it is the Church which should set that example. The faith in inevitable progress which man recently made for himself has been undermined by the course of events. That faith was always ill-founded, for it took no account of the Fall. It was a Christian heresy, for it was related to a hope bred by the Christian view of life and unknown in the ancient world, and, like all heresies, it had an element of truth. True hope came into the world with the gospel, as it proclaimed that history has significance and human life a meaning here and a destined fulfilment hereafter.

Mr. Reckitt objects to the charge that the secular doctrine of progress transferred this interpretation of human development from another world to this one. That is to state the contrast too sharply. Life in this world is meant to have significance, and even here fulfilment does come to us in flashes and sometimes persists awhile. The real point of divergence between the Christian hope and the purely humanist ideal is that the former declares that, though there is significance here, there is no true culmination for humanity on this earth.

The disquieting thing is that in reaction from the humanist assumption of inevitable progress, now proved untenable, men have turned not to the Christian hope but to cynicism, despair and the philosophy of eat, drink and be merry. Yet there lurks in the heart of man a hunger to find a meaning in history and to envisage a satisfactory culmination of all that has gone before ; and that is what the philosophy of Communism claims to supply. That is the secret of much of its success : that is what makes it an ally of Christianity over against frivolity and despair ; but that is also what obliges the Christian to view it narrowly, for in respect of its interpretation of history and history's culmination it is a dangerous heresy, a secularisation of the Christian hope.

In what mood, then, should the Christian face the grave world situation that confronts us ? To some extent it must be a sober mood ; for it appears that he will have to go on living for many years in an atmosphere of antagonism to the opposing system of Communism, and yet he must not allow his antagonism to be corrupted into mere hatred. Moreover, he will need to learn how to live without a clear secular hope, sustaining a discipline, without illusion and without crippling fear, though it may seem to bring no constructive result. For all that the Christian will need deeper resources of faith and understanding than those on which he is normally content to rely. It is natural for Christians in time of crisis to pin their hopes to the cultural environment with which they are familiar, especially if it is favourable to the practice and propagation of their religion. A glance back into history, however, may suggest how illegitimate and dangerous that may be. For a brief period in the fourth century it must have seemed as if the Church, having survived Roman persecution, might enter peacefully on the rich heritage of classical civilization. The barbarian incursions frustrated that hope, and not without great pain and loss did the Church adjust itself to the new situation. Yet it did so adjust itself that out of the Dark Ages there came what, with all their faults, may still be called the ages of faith. The moral surely is that we have no right to assume that the world will come to an end because Western man has failed to live up to his high calling, and has provoked a new barbarism to plunder his civilization. The mood of the Christian ought to be one of courage—the courage born of a faith that knows it lives between the D-day and the V-day of the Christian dispensation. God's essential victory has been won already. The Christian is not imprisoned in time, and the things of time can do him no mortal harm. Mr. Reckitt concludes with some words of Chesterton —' We must somehow find a way of loving the world without trusting it,' and he comments— ' It would be difficult to put in fewer words the essence of the Church's duty to man and society, and all those who are truly of the faithful must resolve, come what may, to take their share in the performance of that duty.'

Paul's Certainties

V. The Gift of the Spirit and Life beyond Death—2 Corinthians v. 1–5

By Principal C. L. Mitton, B.A., M.Th., Ph.D., Handsworth College, Birmingham

'We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. . . . Now he that hath wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.'—2 Co 5[1. 5].

In this memorable passage Paul confronts us with not only one of his basic certainties, but two. First he affirms his unshakable confidence in the life beyond death; and secondly his personal awareness of the gift of the Spirit as a present reality in the experience of believers.

At first sight these two certainties may appear quite unrelated to each other, but in Paul's understanding of them they are inseparably linked together. Indeed the significance of this passage lies not only in his affirmation of the two certainties, but also in the way in which he associates them as distinguishable parts of what is in fact one fundamental unity. For him the gift of the Spirit, the undisputed present privilege of every Christian believer, is a foretaste and a guarantee of the life of heaven, his future privilege.

The five verses under consideration may be paraphrased as follows: *We know*, writes Paul, that if this house of clay, our physical body, in which we now live, is destroyed, we are to receive another dwelling from God, a home in heaven, which has not been made by mortal hands, and so is not subject to decay and destruction. In this present fragile house of clay we experience distress and frustration (cf. Ro 8[23]), but this only makes us long the more to gain our heavenly home, for once we are safely installed there, we shall have no need to fear the wretched fate of finding ourselves homeless and destitute. One element in the distress which besets our life on earth is our natural shrinking from the need to leave this familiar, earthly home; but the chief significance of a Christian's death is not that it separates him from his earthly home, but that it leads him to his heavenly home. Our joy at gaining this great and lasting privilege makes all sorrow at our earthly loss seem too trivial to notice. God made us not only for the life on earth but for eternal life beyond death, and in order to give us certainty that it is real and sure, He has provided a foretaste of it in the present gift of the Spirit.

It is characteristic of Paul, indeed of all the writers of the New Testament, that for them death has been stripped of its terror. It was this 'answer to death' that enabled the early Christians not only to live victoriously but to die triumphantly, and by their death-defying faith to rouse in many others a wistful longing to share their secret. In this passage Paul quietly and firmly gives expression to that same faith. Without it he elsewhere confesses he would be of all men most miserable. With it he is 'more than conqueror.' Not only, however, does Paul declare his confidence of the truth of the life beyond death; he also discloses to us something of the nature of that life.

Firstly, he tells us, in that life we shall not be found naked (homeless and destitute), but we shall be 'clothed upon.' In this somewhat curious way Paul affirms his confidence that this future life will be a real, full, personal life, and not just a vague, disembodied, ghostly survival, unworthy of being called 'life' at all. The early Israelite idea of Sheol was little better than this, for it was regarded as a dark land of forgetfulness (Ps 88[12]), whose inhabitants cannot praise God (Ps 115[17]); they are cut off from Him; indeed they 'are no more' (Ps 39[13]). It was a prospect without hope, grim and desolate, to be awaited with sickening dread. The early Greeks thought of Hades in a similar way; and even if the later Greeks sometimes visualized the survival of the soul in a somewhat less unattractive light, it was still that of an unreal, disembodied spirit, wandering and homeless. It was with the purpose of proclaiming a hope far greater than this that Paul declared that the believer will be 'clothed upon,' that is, provided with a new and lasting home. There our personal lives will be, not emptier and more devoid of meaning than our life on earth, but infinitely fuller and finer.

This same important truth Paul seeks to safeguard in a different figure of speech in 1 Co 15^{35-44} where he insists that the resurrection of believers will be not merely a spiritual event, but in some sense a bodily event. He does not mean that this earthly body of flesh and blood will be raised, for flesh and blood will not inherit the Kingdom of God; but we shall pass through death with a 'spiritual body.' This spiritual body is basically related to our earthly body in some such way as a flower is related to the dry, unpromising seed from which it grows, though in appearance it is unrecognizably different from it (1 Co 15^{35-38}). The word 'body' is perhaps misleading for modern readers, and in current speech may best be represented by the word 'personality.' Through his insistence on the reality of the spiritual body in the after-life, Paul is affirming that our real self, our personality, will not be lost or even attenuated in that other life, but raised to a higher degree of worth and significance.

Secondly, this life beyond death is marked by the closeness of its relationship to Christ. The Christian will not only have a home, but he will be 'at home with the Lord' (2 Co 5^{8}), or, to borrow the phrasing from Ph 1^{23}, he will 'be with Christ.' This is characteristic of Paul's thinking of what lies beyond this life on earth. Even in his earlier writings, when apparently the Second Coming of Christ and with it the End of this earthly dispensation seemed more imminent to him than his own death, he still interpreted the consummation in terms of his relationship to Christ: 'So shall we ever be with the Lord' (1 Th 4^{17}). In this Paul shows himself in close accord with the words of Jesus in Jn 14^{2-3}: 'I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also.'

Thirdly, this life beyond death is based on moral considerations (2 Co 5^{10}). It is quite different from Sheol or Hades, where good and bad share the same fate, and no distinction is made between them. In Paul's thinking we 'must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each may receive the things done in the body according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' As in Mt $25^{34.\ 41}$ the Judge's verdict is based on His discernment of moral differences. God will in His righteous judgment 'render to every man according to his works' (Ro 2^{6}). It is true that we are justified by grace (Ro 3^{24}), but that great privilege which God in His mercy bestows on the believer here and now, without any calculation of our merit, is meant to prove itself the vantage point from which comes glad obedience to the will of God, and whether this has taken place or not will be the subject of the inquiry at the Last Judgment.

Fourthly, we note that the wonder of this life beyond death defies the power of words to express it; indeed it surpasses what the heart can conceive (1 Co 2^{9}). The least inadequate word to use to try to describe it is the word 'glory.' It will be 'an eternal weight of *glory* beyond all comparison' (2 Co 4^{17} [R.S.V.]). 'The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the *glory* that is to be revealed to us' (Ro 8^{18}). 'We shall be raised in *glory*' (1 Co 15^{43}). Those who are saved have the promise that they will at the last also 'be glorified' (Ro 8^{30}). But beyond suggesting the points already mentioned and also the unspeakable splendour of that other life, Paul does not attempt to unveil its secrets.

Paul, therefore, finds great joy and comfort in his hopes of heaven. But it would be a serious error to think that therefore, for him, the Christian life here on earth is just a weary trudge, made bearable only by the confident hope of future happiness. *He knows* that some of the splendour of what is to come has already broken through into this present evil world. These rich blessings which the pious Jew was accustomed to associate only with the 'last days' had already appeared on the earth and were the present privilege of believers. This 'realized eschatology,' as we often call it, is to be found in the teaching of Jesus as well. For to the Jews at the time of Jesus the coming of the Kingdom of God was expected only in the 'last days,' but Jesus proclaimed that in the mighty works of healing which He performed the Kingdom had already broken into the world (Lk 11^{20}). The fulfilment of the Kingdom still lay in the future, but a real anticipation of it had become available now.

Moreover, in the teaching of Jesus, the Kingdom of God is sometimes represented as 'life,' as for instance in the parallel statements of Mk 9^{43-47}, where to 'enter into life' is equated with 'to enter into the Kingdom'; and this 'life' is sometimes clearly a present possession rather than merely a future hope. The Fourth Gospel, for instance, characterizes this new quality of 'life' as 'eternal life,' and there the emphasis is almost entirely upon the reality of its immediate availability, even though its consummation is to be on the 'last day.'

Similarly the word 'salvation' is used, by Paul as well as by others, to denote the supreme gift of God to man. Sometimes it refers primarily to the *final* blessing of God which lies beyond the last judgment. Paul writes, for instance: 'Now is our salvation nearer than when we [first] believed' (Ro 13^{11}). But salvation is also a *present* reality in the experience of believers. In Eph 2^{8} the perfect tense is carefully and emphatically chosen: 'By grace *have* ye been saved through faith.'

Salvation, like the Kingdom of God and Eternal Life, has been inaugurated for the believer, though not yet consummated. Paul would not have felt any incongruity in the words of Jesus to Zacchæus : ' To-day *has* salvation come to this house.'

So too in relation to the glorious life of heaven presented to us in the context of 2 Co 5^{1-5}, Paul is eager to insist that, although so much still lies ahead, beckoning us on in hope, there is already granted to us here and now a definite foretaste of heaven. This foretaste of heaven is the gift of the Spirit.

The Coming of the Spirit was associated in contemporary Jewish thought with the ' last days.' The prophet Joel was quoted as saying :

> It shall be in the last days, saith God,
> I will pour forth my Spirit upon all flesh.

In the coming of Jesus, however, as we have seen, what had previously been expected only at the end of this earthly dispensation has been brought forward into the present moment. It was so with the Kingdom of God, Eternal Life, and Salvation. So too is it with the gift of the Spirit. Usually this was regarded as the prerogative of those who would be alive in the last days, but owing to strikingly unusual circumstances it had *now* become a present reality, a recognized feature of the present experience of the Christian believer. ' God has given us the Spirit,' says Paul (2 Co 5^5 [R.S.V.]). So too the writer to the Hebrews can say to his readers : ' You have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted . . . the powers of the age to come ' (He 6^5).

It is not only in this passage in 2 Corinthians, however, that it becomes clear that Paul could appeal to the reality of the present possession of the Spirit in the experience of Christians as an undisputed fact. We find him seriously disturbed by a group of immature believers near Ephesus who could not give a definite ' yes ' to his inquiry : ' Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed ? ' (Ac 19^2). To him it was the normal expectation that, when a man committed his life in trust and obedience to God in Christ, God honoured that faith by bestowing a new ' power from on high,' which lifted life to a new level of possibility. On this same assumption he asks the Galatians (3^2) : ' Did ye receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith ? ' The manner of the coming of the Spirit is in question, but there is no question at all that the Spirit has come to them. Similarly at 4^6 he writes : ' God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts ' ; and at 5^{25} he pleads : ' If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit also let us walk.' When he writes to the Romans he writes to people of whom he knows little except that they are believers, but the mere fact that they are believers enables him to say : ' Ye received the Spirit of Adoption,' that is the good Spirit from God, who brings man, by His coming, into that right relationship with God in which we know God as our Father and ourselves as His children. Also in Ro 8^{23} we read : ' We have the firstfruits of the Spirit.'

In these five verses from 2 Co 5 Paul makes special use of this undisputed fact of Christian experience. He appeals to it, as something generally accepted and well-known in order to throw light on something less immediately familiar. The present possession of the Spirit Paul here calls ' the earnest of the Spirit.' This does not mean that God has already bestowed a small portion of the Spirit as a kind of token of a larger portion to come later. Rather it is that the abundant outpouring of the Spirit, already known and appropriated, is an ' earnest ' here and now of the very life of heaven, that life which is ' eternal in the heavens,' by which our poor mortal existence is finally to be ' swallowed up.'

This word ' earnest ' is used in the R.V. to translate the Greek word *arrabon* (which occurs also in precisely similar contexts in 2 Co 1^{22} and Eph 1^{13-14}). This English word is now almost archaic, and is rarely used in current speech, so that itself it needs to be translated into modern English. The Greek word *arrabon* is used in the Greek version of the Old Testament to describe a token handed over to serve as a guarantee that an adequate money payment will be made later. With this meaning in mind the R.S.V. translates it in 2 Co 5^5 as a ' guarantee ' of something promised in the future. It is, however, more than just a guarantee, which may consist of something quite unrelated to the future payment in cash. It is also a ' foretaste ' or ' sample.' This significance of the word would be clearer, perhaps, in the days before money was commonly used in commercial transactions, and when payment was generally made in kind, and not in cash. A dealer in corn, for instance, might wish to buy bales of cloth at one of the sea ports. He cannot, however, carry with him to the quay the whole quantity of wheat, but only a few sample bags. He assures prospective buyers that they are a fair sample of the whole consignment. The transaction is regarded as accomplished and legally valid when these sample bags are handed over. They are the ' earnest,' that is the accepted guarantee that the whole consignment will be delivered later at an agreed time, and that it will all be of the same quality as the sample. That is the *arrabon*.

Paul seeks to illumine our understanding of the life of heaven by telling us that the gift of the Spirit may be regarded as its *arrabon*, a foretaste which makes us sure of the full allotment laid up in store

for us and also aware of its nature and quality. As we sometimes sing, 'That, that is the fullness, but this is the taste.' The present gift of the spirit is thought of as the life of heaven proleptically imparted to human life. We may know from it both the certainty of heaven, and something of the nature of it.

We may find a rough parallel in domestic life, if we picture a small boy gladly spending a cold winter morning of the Christmas holidays in the warmth of the kitchen with his mother, as she cooks and bakes in preparation for a family party in the evening. As the various good things come out of the oven he is allowed a small taste of each, and what he tastes heightens his expectation of the coming feast. Later when the guests arrive, a teasing adult jocularly suggests to the boy that they have all come to the party, but how do they know there is anything to eat, or anything better than just plain bread and water. But the small boy smiles knowingly. There is no doubt whatever about the good things to come, because he has already had some. He has had an 'earnest' of what is prepared for them. So for Christians the experience of the uplifting power of the Spirit is a foretaste of heaven.

Some may hesitate to speak of the experience of the Holy Spirit as something so real and personal, but we do well to remind ourselves that the absence of this experience was something which Paul could quickly detect in the group of Christians at Ephesus, and also he frequently speaks of this gift as 'in our hearts' (*e.g.*, 2 Co 1^{22}, Gal 4^{6}). It is a present reality of Christian experience.

That the gift of the Spirit is, however, much more than an individualistic experience is clear from the phrase 'the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.' We may imagine the great city of Rome in the first century of our era, and a lonely miserable slave, recently brought there by force from his home hundreds of miles away, and sold to a callous employer. At night, when his duties are done, he wanders disconsolate and forlorn through the dark streets, but his misery and wretchedness is no one's concern. Unexpectedly a passer-by speaks to him kindly and invites him to spend an hour at his fireside. He wonders whether some base motive prompts this apparently disinterested kindness. But as he returns again and again to that warm and friendly kitchen, he finds they expect nothing from him, and are not seeking to use him for any wicked purpose. They seem to love him for his own sake and to be eager to befriend him for the sake of befriending him. He learns in time what prompts this odd concern for a worthless stranger. It is their faith in Christ. So he, too, comes to accept that same faith, since it has produced in others such lovely qualities. He finds his own heart infected with the hope and faith and love which he has come to know in them. That little crowded kitchen has become for him like a corner of heaven implanted before its time in this bleak and cruel earth. When he speaks to his fellow-slaves of his new faith and his expectation of a life with Christ beyond death, they sceptically ask him how he knows there is such a life, or what it will be like. His confident reply is that he does know, because he has had a foretaste of it in the love and faith which he has found in 'the church which meets in so-and-so's house.' The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit there has made for him the hope of heaven quite real and sure, and wonderfully attractive.

If then we ask what further we may learn of the life of heaven from Paul's bold assertion that a foretaste of it has been provided for us in the gift of the Spirit, we begin by asking what are the characteristics of this gift. From Paul we learn that three things mark the presence of the Spirit: firstly a glad and confident awareness of God as One whom we love, trust and obey as 'Abba, Father' (Ro 8^{15}, Gal 4^{6}). Secondly it brings to the believer a heightened sense of 'life' (Ro $8^{2.\ 6.\ 11}$, Gal 6^{8}), in which is evident such fruits of the Spirit as 'peace and joy' (Gal 5^{22}). Thirdly, it makes possible a new quality of goodness (or holiness), for in place of resentment, ill-will, self-pity and discontent, which so often characterize our poor human nature, there are brought into being love, forgiveness, kindliness, patience and generosity (Gal 5^{22-23}).

If these are the consequences of the gift of the Spirit, they are also a foretaste of heaven. Heaven therefore will be true happiness in the presence of God, life which is life indeed, and perfect love. Here on earth we may know it in part, in order that we may the more confidently expect it in its perfection in heaven.

Devotional and Pastoral Classics

Thomas Traherne's 'Centuries of Meditations'

By Nathaniel Micklem, D.D., LL.D., Principal Emeritus of Mansfield College, Oxford

Works of devotion, when they are readable, should be read, not criticized; for these rare books are derived from a colloquy between the soul of a man and God which is to be overheard with reverence. Yet since books will not be read unless first they are made known, we must do our best.

It is by a happy chance or special Providence that we possess the *Centuries of Meditations* and by a casual allusion that the author has been identified. In Bertram Dobell's Introduction to Traherne's poems, published in 1903, we can read the story of the discovery of the manuscripts lost to view and memory for two centuries and of the fine literary detective work whereby the author's identity has been with certainty established.

Thomas Traherne's name does not appear in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and nothing, I think, is known of him beyond the few facts that Dobell gathered from various sources. These, however, seem enough to show that the life and character of Traherne matched his writing. In virtue of his rediscovery he is an outstanding figure in that impressive seventeenth century which gave us the passions of the Civil War, the learned theologies of the great Puritans, the Metaphysical Poets and the Cambridge Platonists.

Traherne belonged to no school or clique. It is inevitable that his poetry be compared with that of Henry Vaughan; as a writer of prose he reminds me sometimes of the exaltations of Peter Sterry or Samuel Rutherford (in his Letters) and of the fecundity of Jeremy Taylor; indeed, I think I have detected one very clear verbal reminiscence of Taylor in the *Centuries*.

Traherne was certainly a Welshman. He might be said to have transmuted English prose into a vehicle for rhapsodical Welsh religion. Unless we be of an entirely seraphical spirit, Traherne will not carry us with him in all his raptures; but we properly ask of a saint or a poet (and Traherne was both) what he has seen; and, if he has seen much in heaven, it will not trouble us greatly that there are aspects of earth that he has failed to see. He must be read positively for his vision, not critically for his fallibility.

There is repetition in the *Centuries*, and the word 'infinite' occurs far too often, but the work was never finished and is presumably unrevised. The style of writing is always lyrical and distinguished; it is often splendid. The main theme may be expressed in three brief sentences: 'I will in the light of my soul show you the universe'; 'are not praises the very end for which the world was created?'; 'love is the true means by which the world is enjoyed.'

Traherne could not imagine anything more wonderful, more beautiful, more soul-kindling, more 'worthy of a God' than the world in which he found himself. He was to the end of his days like a child dancing in ecstasy on a sunny day amid the buttercups. The world, he was sure, was made for man and to kindle the thankfulness of man. 'You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and Kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world.' But our eyes must be opened that we may see, for 'the world is both a Paradise and a Prison for different persons.'

Their immeasurable delight in Nature is a thread that binds Ikhnaton, Francis of Assisi and Traherne. Their religion is happiness; yet, at least for the Christians, it is no light-hearted happiness. The Cross, says Traherne, 'is the root of happiness, and the gate of Heaven'; it is in the light of the Cross that 'we see how to possess all the things in Heaven and Earth after His similitude.' In his lyrical writing about the Cross he is reminiscent of St. John, the Damascene; yet Traherne must be counted among the blessed once-born. To him the Cross is the manifestation of the eternal, boundless love; he cannot plumb the depths of evil; he accepts the grim theory of Atonement current in his time and can bring himself to write that 'Hell itself is a part of God's Kingdom, to wit His prison. It is fitly mentioned in the enjoyment of the world. And is itself by the happy enjoyed as a part of the world.'

In virtue of one poem or even of a single stanza in it Dobell claims Traherne as a Berkeleian before Berkeley, but in fact Traherne's epistemology is Aristotelian, not Berkeleian. 'The actualities of the sensible object and of the sensitive faculty,'

wrote Aristotle in the *de Anima*, ' are *one* actuality in spite of the difference between their modes of being.' But Traherne seems to have held that being in the mind is a more excellent mode than being in the external world : ' things dead in dead place effect nothing. But in a living Soul, that seeth their excellencies, they excite a pleasure answerable to their value, a wisdom to embrace them, a courage not to forsake them, a love of their Donor, praises and thanksgivings ; and a greatness and a joy equal to their goodness.'

The mind of man, as I understand Traherne, is proportionate to the whole field of the knowable ; it can contain and possess the starry heavens ; ' the present age is too little to contain it,' for ' I can visit Noah in his ark, and swim upon the waters of the deluge. I can see Moses with his rod, and the children of Israel passing through the sea ; I can enter into Aaron's Tabernacle and admire the mysteries of the holy place.' He can even claim in one place that ' the eternity of God Himself is manageable to the understanding,' though a little further on there is a qualification, ' as much as a creature can possibly do.'

The knower in the act of knowing is one with the object known, but Aristotle had earth, not heaven, in mind. Traherne dares further : ' we likewise ought to show our infinite love by upholding Heaven and Earth, Time and Eternity, God and all things in our Souls, without wavering or intermission : by the perpetual influx of our life.' So ' at length shall you appear before God in Sion : and as God converse with God for evermore.' The language of the *unio mystica* can never be exact ; it is always dangerous.

As a mirror reflects the sky, so the mind or soul of man reflects the universe, but while we are still on earth amid the mists of error the soul is present to all things only virtually. The soul of man potentially possesses, contains and realizes all things, and this not so much by knowing as by loving ; or, rather, loving is the foundation of all true knowing. As God in His loving is *actus purus*, wholly and eternally realized Actuality, as the Schoolmen put it, so, says Traherne, we must by means of love realize all the potentialities of our mind and soul ; ' till we become therefore all Act as God is, we can never rest, nor ever be satisfied.'

' Our greatest treasures ' are ' the sons of men,' for they can give love as well as receive love ; but the world lies in wickedness ; ' to think the world therefore a general Bedlam, or place of madmen, and oneself a physician, is the most necessary point of present wisdom : an important imagination, and the way to Happiness.' The Christian, in fact, is to be ' like a royal chemist to reign among poisons, to turn scorpions into fishes, weeds into flowers, bruises into ornaments, poisons into cordials.' We may catch Traherne's spirit without accepting his biology.

Traherne was happy in the Anglican Church of his day ; he was a poet, a saint and a philosopher ; the type of religion expounded in the *Centuries* is not ecclesiastical nor sacerdotal nor sacramental. ' There are Christians,' he says, ' that place and desire all their happiness in another life, and there is another sort of Christians that desire happiness in this. . . . Whether the first sort be Christians indeed, look you to that ' ; Traherne, then, must not be ranked among the Puritans. He was a mystic proclaiming the way of union with God, not through asceticism or introversion but through happiness in the delight and wonder and endless mystery of the world of men and things which God has made. He was no scientist but saw all that in Nature which scientists in their science are bound to miss. He was, as he himself says of David, ' a constant, heavenly, pure, seraphic flame.'

Literature

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

In 1948 Professor C. A. Simpson, D.Th., D.D., then of New York, published a large book on ' The Early Traditions of Israel,' in which a detailed analysis of the pre-Deuteronomic narrative of the Hexateuch was undertaken. A sequel to that work, under the title *Composition of the Book of Judges* (Blackwell ; 42s. net), has now appeared from the pen of the same author, who is to-day the Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford. The method is the same as that adopted in the earlier work. The author first essays a minute analysis of the pre-Deuteronomic material in the Book of Judges and then gives the text of the J material followed by the text of the E material, as it emerges from his analysis, with a concluding section on the redactional material in the book. It will be noted that Professor Simpson identifies the two main sources with the J and E sources found in the Pentateuch. As in the earlier work a J^1 strand is distinguished from a J^2 strand. The author believes that the J^1 strand was written, probably at Hebron, early in the reign of David, and he anticipates a forthcoming work dealing with the analysis of the Books of Samuel and Kings

down to the Disruption by saying he finds the J^1 source to disappear with the transfer of the capital to Jerusalem.

While the reviewer thinks it is possible to establish the use of a variety of sources, he is not persuaded that it is possible to pin-point the precise limits of the material from each so exactly as is here done. He recognizes the immense labour and acute reasoning that has gone into the making of this work, the significance of which is the greater because in recent years there has been a vigorous challenge to the whole method of literary criticism from the Scandinavian traditio-historical school. Professor Simpson thinks his work points the way to a reconciliation of the older discipline of literary analysis and the more recent approach of traditio-historical criticism.

His earlier book was the subject of a very detailed reply in a full-scale monograph by Professor Eissfeldt, whose own analysis differed in method and results from that of Professor Simpson. In the present work an appendix of nearly fifty pages is devoted to a reply to Eissfeldt's criticisms. This appendix is of great importance, and all who would be abreast of the discussion of the problem of the sources of the Pentateuch should study it carefully. The battle of Pentateuchal criticism is to-day being fought on several fronts, and the problem is more complex than it was once thought to be.

H. H. Rowley

AFRICA 1914–1954

In *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, vol. iv (Lutterworth Press; 45s. net) Professor C. P. Groves deals with the forty years between 1914 and 1954. Just as the ancient cartographers could fill their spacious maps with imagined creatures, so the chronicler of the pioneering days could paint his Livingstones, Hanningtons and Slessors larger than life and linger over their achievements. Not so in a volume that tells of a continent which lies open for the first time in history. Christian forces are everywhere, and it is hard indeed to keep a space for living souls among the statistics that must be set down, the institutions reckoned, converts counted and achievements estimated. These pages are at times as close-crowded with facts and figures as are the African markets with clamant humanity. Yet the writer does not lose grasp of his story, and there is much that is soundly said.

These are the days of giant strides in the one-time 'dark continent.' Aggrey used to say that the very shape of Africa was a question mark. The end of World War I saw deported missionaries, flocks left shepherdless, tribes on the move. A new self-assurance was born in the African, and a slump in the prestige of the white man. The development of minerals, oil, and farm crops even in the past few years has brought the African territories into the markets of the world.

Advances there certainly have been in every way of Christian and commercial endeavour. Whither do they tend? On the one hand there are the nine hundred separatist sects of South Africa, on the other, the well-named Trinity College in Eastern Nigeria where Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian students are trained together for the ministry. Side by side with the remarkable educational advance to University level there is the persistent revival of initiation rites and the terror of primitive ordeal tests. Islam makes converts far and wide, and more contagious still is the prevailing secularist temper of the West. What prospect is there that this third phase of the entry of Christianity into Africa will survive the cataclysms of history better than its predecessors?

In his conclusion the writer of these magnificent volumes suggests an answer born of facts and faith. 'Remember whose you are' is a personal appeal to a personal relationship, and to this appeal Africans are peculiarly susceptible. Devotion to a master, as Livingstone's faithfuls showed, can surmount all obstacles. 'When that acknowledged Master is Jesus Christ, to whom life is committed as to a personal Saviour, within the fellowship of the Church, the resurgence of pagan thought and practice is so much the less to be feared as there is no remnant of unsatisfied desire left alive to welcome it. That there are those within all branches of the Church in Africa for whom this is a growing personal experience is the all-sufficient ground for hope persistent.'

Donald M. McFarlan

JOURNEYING WITH PAUL

In *With Paul in Greece* (Parthenon Press, Nashville, Tenn.; $2.50) Dr. Robert S. Kinsey has presented us with a fascinating book. Dr. Kinsey is a trained archaeologist; and he has travelled all over the Greece which Paul knew. In this book he presents us with most useful and interesting historical and archaeological material about Neapolis, Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth. In light of all this he gives us most illuminating studies of the Letters to the Philippians, the Thessalonians and the Corinthians.

Dr. Kinsey throughout this book assumes that Paul was trained in classical literature, that he knew Homer, and that he may have actually taken his metaphor of the Church as a body from the similar metaphor used by Socrates. Nothing could be less likely than that. No orthodox Rabbi such as Paul would have any real acquaintance with

classical literature. There is a rabbinic story of a young and advanced Rabbi who told an older Rabbi that, since he had now mastered the Hebrew Law, he proposed to turn to Greek literature. The older man pointed out that it was God's command that the student should meditate on the Law *day and night*, and that, therefore, the only hours which could be devoted to Greek letters must be hours which belonged neither to the day nor to the night! True, on occasion Paul quotes the classics but the rarity of his quotations is significant.

Dr. Kinsey has an odd habit of imparting information by a series of questions. In writing of Athens and its many statues Dr. Kinsey says: 'Did not Pausanias record that Athens had more statues than all the rest of Greece put together? Wasn't it Petronius, the author of an extant novel, who has a character remark that in her neighbourhood at Athens it was easier to find a stone statue than a man of flesh and blood? Doesn't the Roman writer Pliny actually give us the number of statues in the time of Nero—thirty thousand public ones besides the countless statues sitting around in the private homes of the Athenians?' On page after page this is Dr. Kinsey's normal method of writing.

On p. 9 *beseiged* should be *besieged*; on p. 92 *Phedias* should be *Pheidias*; on p. 108 *Ramsey* should be *Ramsay*.

But when all criticisms have been made, it remains to say that this is a fascinating book, and a book of real scholarship with references given and meticulously documented. This book will undoubtedly take its place as a most valuable part of the literature on the background of the Pauline Letters.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

GRACE AND FREEWILL

More than a century after the almost simultaneous publication of two English translations of Luther's *De servo arbitrio*, three fresh ones have recently been announced by different publishers, and the first of them has already appeared. *Martin Luther on The Bondage of the Will*, newly translated by J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston (James Clarke; 15s. net), is an attractively produced volume, in which Luther's not very attractive Latin is turned into easily readable English and furnished with an Introduction and Notes that help to explain what it is all about. Whether it contains, as the translators suggest, the solution for the problems of modern Protestantism, is a debatable question; but it certainly contains some of Luther's profoundest insights, and it will well repay careful study. Luther wrote his book, of course, in reply to that of Erasmus on the freedom of the will, and his purpose was simply to defend the doctrine of salvation *sola gratia*, by grace alone. Unfortunately he felt obliged to meet Erasmus's argument point by point, so that his answer is largely determined by Erasmus's way of putting the question, and his own position does not always emerge as clearly as could be wished. There is no doubt that, as his translators say, 'Luther's denial of "free-will" has nothing to do with the psychology of action'; but sometimes it looks as if it had, and there is some excuse for Erasmus if he 'sometimes speaks as if Luther's determinism involved a doctrine of psychological compulsion.' Again, if it is true that 'evangelical theology stands or falls with the doctrine of the bondage of the will' many readers will want that doctrine stated without recourse to a theory of two wills in God—a 'hidden' predestinating will that elects the few and reprobates the many, and a revealed will of mercy and grace that offers salvation to all in Christ. In controversy Luther tends to forget his own theological principle, which in pastoral practice he always applied, that we should stick to the revelation of God in Christ and not speculate about the Divine Majesty. Nevertheless he has much to teach us, if we have the patience to follow his thought, both about man's inability to save himself and God's will and power to save; and his teaching is certainly timely in a day when all man's achievements are mocked by desperate, universal fear.

PHILIP S. WATSON

A NEW LECTIONARY

The Christian Year and Lectionary Reform, by the Rev. A. Allan McArthur, B.D., Ph.D. (S.C.M.; 25s. net) is a sequel to the same author's 'The Evolution of the Christian Year', which was widely acclaimed as an authoritative historical study. In the present volume Dr. McArthur advances to what has been his real objective—the framing of a lectionary suitable for a Reformed Church to-day.

He points out that there is no reason why the Roman-Anglican pattern of a lectionary should be regarded as a universal Christian tradition, when in fact it is but one among many ancient systems. Moreover the traditional Christian Year is really only a half-year with the seasons after Epiphany and Pentecost simply filled up with lessons. What is required now is a new act of liturgical creation whereby the traditional half-year will be developed into a complete cycle manifesting the whole sweep of the Christian faith according to the order of the creed.

Dr. McArthur's own attempt at this is set forth in this book in the form of the Peterhead Lectionary

together with an introduction explaining the principles involved and with tables appended showing the proportions of the Scriptural books used and the average length of the lessons.

We note that forty-five per cent of Genesis is used and ninety-five per cent of Mark, and that the year begins on the first Sunday of October and continues for six Sundays with lessons under the general heading of the Revelation of God the Father—Creation and Providence, then advances into Advent under the general heading of the Revelation of God the Son—Incarnation, and so on. We trust that the lectionary will be widely used and that this fuller development of the ancient pattern will be sympathetically judged. This is a book of real importance by a scholar whose purpose is practical and necessary.

STEWART MECHIE

AN ESSAY IN CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC

The Rev. William Nicholls has been quick to follow up the success of his first book, ' Ecumenism and Catholicity,' which brought him into prominence at an unusually early age. *Revelation in Christ* (S.C.M. ; 15s. net) is a critical study of what is meant and implied by the testimony of Christian faith that God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. The book has a value of its own in that it was written while memory was clear of the author's struggles, as a student, to understand revelation in the context of the meaning of Biblical authority in the post-critical age. This value is enhanced by the firmness of the grasp of the fact that the existence and nature of God are not natural certainties for the human mind. Here the argument is well illustrated from the comparative study of religions and by insight into the minds of students gained from Mr. Nicholls' chaplaincy at Edinburgh.

Since God remains unknown unless He makes Himself known, it follows that, for the Christian, the doctrine of revelation is inseparable from faith in the incarnation of the Word and the doctrine of the Trinity. And, further, there is no sure way to God outside the Church whose members enjoy the knowledge of God and whose mission is to make men see the glory revealed. In the course of arguing this case, the author examines the meaning, in this context, of ' know ' and leads up to a stress on ' the rationality of personal commitment ' which provides him with a most cogent apologetic in that full human life requires just this kind of rationality.

In the first part of the book the argument moves smoothly and persuasively but Mr. Nicholls seems to lose his sure touch when he goes on to consider the problems connected with the fact that revelation must be expressed in communicable propositions. While he deftly criticizes certain elements in contemporary tradition, it may be that some of his own presuppositions are under question. He has yet to come to terms with the paradox which he expresses so clearly : ' In God's revelation of Himself, the mystery of God remains, is indeed immensely deepened, and yet in His mystery He suffers Himself to be known.' It is quite certain that as Mr. Nicholls continues to grapple with the questions so admirably posed here the very great promise of this book will pass into greater achievement.

MARCUS WARD

REVELATION AND EXISTENCE

A useful study of Bultmann's theology has been provided by Mr. H. P. Owen, M.A., Lecturer in Biblical Studies in the University College of North Wales, in his book, *Revelation and Existence* (University of Wales Press ; 15s. net). While the author finds much of value in Bultmann's work, and believes that the task of giving ' an existentialist interpretation of Christian faith is both valid and necessary,' he disagrees with some of the ways in which Bultmann has carried out this task, and contends that his work needs both supplementation and modification.

The short introductory account of Bultmann's theology, with which the book opens, contains a valuable discussion of the nature of myth—a topic which too many writers on the demythologizing controversy have passed over without adequate attention. The author then enumerates what he takes to be the basic concepts underlying Bultmann's theological enterprise, and most of the book is taken up with a critical examination of these. This examination is both fair and searching, and helps to throw light on many difficult and controversial points. On two topics, however—those of encounter and history—it may be doubted whether the author does full justice to Bultmann's thought.

There are a few inaccuracies. Heidegger is charged with ' over-simplification ' and ' rigidity ' because he is said to maintain that ' man is either authentic or inauthentic ; he is never a mixture of both.' But this is not so, for Heidegger expressly says, concerning the two modes of authenticity and inauthenticity, that man ' in every case exists in one of these modes, *or is modally undifferentiated.*' The author goes too far when he says that for Bultmann ' God comes to contradict nature, not to fulfil it.' This can be maintained only by ignoring Bultmann's teaching that man's authentic intention is towards life, and that

'salvation is nothing other than the fulfilling' of this intention.

But such criticisms are outweighed by the merits of this book, which is commended to all interested in Bultmann's theology.

JOHN MACQUARRIE

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTIAN HYMNODY

In his latest book, *The Music of Christian Hymnody* (Independent Press; 30s. net), the Rev. Erik Routley, B.D., D.Phil., appears to have three aims in view; first, the writing of a history of the music of Christian hymnody from Reformation times to the present day; second, the defence of a thesis stated at the outset, that 'a depressed standard of hymnody betokens a depressed spiritual state'; and, third, provision of a serviceable commentary to the music of the 'English Hymnal' which, surprisingly, stands alone among modern hymn books in wide circulation in lacking a 'Companion.'

This book is packed with sound scholarship, good reading and useful information, but inevitably the hundred and seventy-five pages into which Dr. Routley has compressed his twenty-five chapters prove insufficient for the entirely successful achievement of any one of his three purposes. The historical evolution of the hymn tune during the past four hundred and fifty years (as it is reflected in our modern English Hymn Books) is profusely and persuasively illustrated; but the ecclesiastical and social history out of which that evolution emerged has had to be reduced to vanishing point.

The parallel between general standards of musical taste and of spiritual health is at times vividly drawn, as in this spirited defence of Dykes: 'It is not so much Dykes who was at fault, as Lady Lufton at Framley and Archdeacon Grantley at Plumstead Episcopi, who took such pleasure in these musical evidences of security and ease, in hearing the choir boys enunciate these mellifluous melodies, in thus being reassured that their duties as clergy and people were confined to preserving the present state of things rather than to prophesying and preaching to dying men' [p. 124]. But where the facts fail to fit the thesis (as in the chapter entitled 'The Musical Reawakening 1890–1906') the thesis is simply ignored. 'The revival of hymnody which we have recently witnessed is chiefly to be ascribed to the fact that this need was recognized by certain musicians altogether more eminent, weighty in authority, and versatile in talent than Dykes, Barnby, Gauntlett or Goss' [p. 134]. The great improvement in standards of taste during the past sixty years would appear to be due not so much to a strengthening of the spiritual fibre of the Church as to the musical integrity and determination of men like Parry, Stanford and Vaughan Williams.

In providing a stimulating companion to the English Hymnal Dr. Routley has been remarkably successful, considering the small compass within which he is working, for almost every tune in that book receives at least passing mention. But this fact, though valuable for reference, can become a little tiresome to the general reader who finds himself confronted by mention of more than a thousand tunes in less than two hundred pages of text. Reference to the words to which the tunes are set is rare.

More than two hundred examples are printed at the end of the book, and these have been selected with the greatest skill. The examples given of early Lutheran Chorales—their exciting rhythmic vitality and modal freedom—will come as a revelation to many readers whose knowledge of these tunes is mediated exclusively through the arrangements of Bach. And the collection of 'holy terrors', drawn from the hey-day of Victorian England are as wickedly entertaining and observant as a book of Hoffnung cartoons.

The Music of Christian Hymnody is packed with admirable material. Perhaps Dr. Routley may still find time to give us 'A Handbook to the English Hymnal,' a comprehensive 'History of English Hymnody,' and a detailed examination of the relationship between musical taste and spiritual vitality! But until these books are written, this one will remain indispensable.

IAN PITT-WATSON

The Rev. Harold G. Newsham, formerly known as a prominent Congregational minister in Scotland and England and as a contributor to 'The Christian Year' in this journal, is now minister of the historic First Church of Christ (Congregational) in Hartford, Connecticut. He has dedicated to his present church a volume of fifteen sermons on Bible characters, which takes its title from the first of them—*The Man who Feared a Bargain* (Abingdon Press; $2.00). We commend it warmly. It not only illustrates the art of a practised sermon-maker, but it shows how Scripture can be made of contemporary urgency.

A new volume has been published in the 'World Perspectives' series—*Man's Western Quest*, by Denis de Rougemont (Allen and Unwin; 15s. net). The distinguished French writer takes a hopeful view of the world situation. The conflict of East and West can be resolved, but for that to happen each must understand itself as well as the other.

This book is a contribution toward such self-understanding on the part of the West. It is neither a history nor a description of Western civilization. Rather the author searches out the attitude that has made Western civilization's most typical creations possible, for example, the person and the machine. The ground covered is large, and there are flashes of insight in plenty from a singularly perceptive and well-informed mind.

Anyone who wishes to preach a course of sermons on the Ten Commandments, but is restrained by the fear that it may be difficult to make them seem relevant to our technological age, should buy *The Ten Commandments and Modern Man*, by Canon H. G. G. Herklots, M.A. (Benn; 10s. 6d. net). Canon Herklots never forgets that he is a Christian preacher who must continually look from the Commandments to Him whose coming not only fulfilled the Law and the Prophets but also released the power needed for the achievement of the Law's ideals. We know no better modern book on the Commandments.

'Wylie Blue' (James Clarke; 10s. 6d. net), a deftly written sketch of a picturesque personality and a notable preacher, will be gratefully received in many quarters. Beginning with echoes of student life seventy years ago, it gives a warm account of Dr. Blue's distinguished ministerial career, lasting over fifty years, in Glasgow, Sunderland, Belfast and Sydney.

While written with friendly admiration, it is not fulsome eulogy. Two little sentences are delightfully phrased. 'He was by nature impulsive and would sometimes act without due consideration.' 'His library was not a large one but it sufficed for his needs.' The book is an interesting and well-earned tribute to the memory of one held in honour and affection wherever he went.

In *The Promises of God* (Dacre Press; 9s. 6d. net) Mr. Carroll E. Simcox has had the happy idea of following a meditation on some Old Testament passage by one on a verbally similar text in the New which either corrects or supplements the first. The result is often quaintly, sometimes startlingly, suggestive. Any pair would serve to set agoing an excellent sermon, and most are salted by a sardonic yet benignant wit like that of Anatole France; for example, on authoritarianism, he says that 'to many the suggestion that God is authoritarian is distasteful.' A typical pair is 'work made tolerable'—Jacob's seven years seeming short for the love of Rachel, and 'work made joyful'—Paul's 'light affliction which is but for a moment.'

The exegesis, however, sometimes needs checking. 'The God of truth' means 'the trusty God.' The contrast of the peace lover of Ps 120 and the peacemakers of Christ's beatitude is good. But it is not a fair estimate of Ps 119 to regard it as expressing a self-righteous complacency to be rebuked by Ro 7; nor is the humility of Ps 131 with its hope in God in real contrast to that commended by Peter.

Lent being pre-eminently the season of self-examination, a Lenten book of any value can hardly fail to be a disturbing one. Archbishop Joost de Blank of Cape Town has written a short but very searching book—*Uncomfortable Words* (Longmans; 6s. net; paper covers, 3s. 6d. net). 'In Lent,' he says, 'we think less of the solace of our religion and more of the demands, less of what it can do for us and more of what we can do for it.' He deals with the challenges wherewith our Lord faces His followers—self-denial (Lk 9^{23}), family loyalties (Lk 14^{26}), how to face social obloquy (Jn 16^{2}), the labourers in the vineyard; true greatness (Mt 20^{26}), the need of unity (Jn 17^{20}), 'no hard feelings' (Mt 5^{23}), prayer that costs (Mt 26^{40}), 'so send I you' (Jn 20^{21}); 'first things first' (Mt 6^{33}). Some of those sayings are not so hard as others but all challenge us. We forget so easily that the Christian life is a warfare and that we are called to arduous sacrificial service. On all his chosen topics the Archbishop speaks plainly and appealingly, and does not let us forget that with all the uncomfortable words is implicitly given the comforting promise—'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

Messrs. Longmans have initiated what promises to be a fascinating series of books entitled 'Men of Wisdom.' The first three numbers are in our hands; they deal respectively with *St. Augustine and His Influence Through the Ages*, by Henri Marrou; *Master Eckhart and the Rhineland Mystics*, by Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache; *Saint Paul and the Mystery of Christ*, by Claude Tresmontant. Each volume runs to a hundred and ninety pages, each is richly illustrated with interesting photographic reproductions, each contains ample well chosen selections from the writings of the Wise Men, and each costs only 6s. net.

Who edits the series we are not informed, but he is making a fine job of it. The writers of the three books are all French scholars of repute and the English translations are excellent. The information given in each is accurate and up-to-date, and a good bibliography for further study is appended. We have seen nothing comparable in excellence to this series for a long time, and we wish the publishers every success in this enterprise.

Many have noted the disparity in the attention given to the few great and the many lesser characters of the Bible. Mr. Herbert F. Stevenson rightly sees that a revelation given to and through persons should be considered in relation to all. In *A Galaxy of Saints* (Marshall, Morgan and Scott; 12s. 6d. net) he draws on the text, on legend, and on imagination, to describe, for purposes of edification, a large number of the less known figures of the Bible. Typical of the author's matter and style is a reference to Matthew: 'Accustomed to using the pen, he dedicated his gift of writing to the Master's service, and to him, in the divine providence, we owe the first Gospel.'

Life from Above: The Need for Emphasis on Biblical Regeneration, by the Rev. John Francis Holliday, B.A., B.D. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott; 10s. 6d. net), is quite definitely a book which matters.

It was written because Mr. Holliday believes—and rightly believes—that the doctrine of regeneration is not receiving the place which it ought to receive in religious thinking, preaching or writing to-day. We cannot do better than quote in full Mr. Holliday's summary of his own book: 'First we shall attempt to describe and to define birth from above. Then we shall consider it against the background of the doctrine of sin and the implications of the Fall. This will be followed by chapters in which we shall make an exegesis of the classic passage containing our Lord's great address on this subject and shall examine the New Testament synonyms for regeneration. Having thus familiarized ourselves with the field, we shall proceed to consider the method by which the new birth is effected, the relation of regeneration to baptism, its connexion with other Biblical doctrines, and the implications of this divine imperative to modern psychology, to liberal theology and to neo-orthodoxy. Before concluding we shall examine the credentials of the re-born, and finally we shall present a thoroughly up-to-date clinical study of spiritual birth, based upon an analysis of the facts and statistics provided by a hundred questionnaires circulated by the writer during the past twelve months.'

It must at once be said that this book fulfils its promise, but it must also be said that it fulfils it in its own way. Its approach to Scripture is basically fundamentalist. It feels free to accept the words of the Fourth Gospel as the actual words of Jesus, and to use them freely as such.

But it remains to say that, even if we differ from the point of view from which this book is written, we shall find it a storehouse of material. This book will provide the reader and the student with all the material on which to form his own point of view.

Moved by the question of an old blind lady whose friends read to her the Epistles from the Book of Common Prayer—'Why,' she asked, 'are the Epistles so difficult?'—Bishop Kenneth Mackenzie set about writing a brief commentary on each Epistle lesson, and the book is published as *The Prayer Book Epistles: A Devotional Commentary for Sundays and the Principal Holy Days* (Mowbray; 10s. 6d. net). The author's aim is to explain difficult words, to give a historical setting to each passage and clear away obscurities; further, to help devotion, he gives suggestions for short meditations or prayer. He has performed his task excellently. His expositions rest on wide study and deep spiritual insight, and many outside his own Communion will read his book to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

The Rev. L. D. Twilley, B.D., has given us an excellent small book—*The Origin and Transmission of the New Testament* (Oliver and Boyd; 8s. 6d. net). Into only sixty-three pages of very clear type he has compressed a great amount of information. He begins by showing how the literature which was to become our New Testament took its rise. Apostolic letters were treasured and copies passed from church to church; then desire was felt for written records of the sayings and the ministry of Jesus. The origin of various readings is explained, and scholarship has critically evaluated the vast available evidence of various readings gradually approaching sound conclusions as to what the authentic text is. It is all very clearly set forth in simple language and the book is admirably fitted to be a reliable introduction to a subject which should appeal to theological students and to a far wider circle. Useful maps and diagrams are provided along with a brief but excellent guide to wider reading.

Undoubtedly the focal point of the sacred year is Good Friday–Easter Day, and it cannot be denied that we have a long way to go in Scotland in the due observance of Good Friday, apart from services throughout Holy Week. The Student Christian Movement Press has instituted an enterprising series of 'Studies in Ministry and Worship.' *Christ our Passover: The Liturgical Observance of Holy Week*, by the Rev. John T. Martin (8s. net), the fourth in the series, gives an interesting account of the work of the Liturgical Movement in one English parish. Presbyterians will look narrowly upon proposals for the Blessing of the Palms, the Stripping of Altars (on Maundy Thursday) and for the Paschal Candle. But they cannot fail to profit from the writer's sincere and devout appreciation of the profound significance of Holy Week.

Caviare for the General: Professor Paul Tillich's Second Volume[1]

By Professor E. Gordon Rupp, D.D., The University of Manchester

In these days when all the best ministers are overworking, and when an alarming number have little time for hard reading, academics must beware of hasty recommendations. And I do not think this difficult, impressive and rewarding volume will be what most working parsons are looking for. It is true that its major claim to significance is in carrying through a thorough 're-statement' of Christian theology, avoiding all the traditional technical language of the Bible and of Christian theology. And the modern preacher, faced with the problem of communicating the gospel within the alien vocabulary of an estranged culture might suppose that this is the very thing he has been seeking for a long time. But alas, this re-statement is not put into plain English, but into a prefabricated theological jargon invented by the author, of almost unimaginable inelegance, a compound of refugee English and theologian's American. How happy it would have been had Tillich been able to write, as he thinks, in German, with its strange capacities for flexibility—such as the distinction between *historisch* and *geschichtlich*, and its readiness to invent portmanteau words, such as *ausweglosigkeit*. None the less, if the reader is made to feel like a very small Alice complaining to a very big Humpty Dumpty about the needless difficulty of a one-sided conversation, Tillich does, I think, make out his case. It is worth the labour of thought involved to learn his words, to follow his argument, and then to plunge off into the further task of re-translating what has been learned into the Christian vocabulary, and the Christian proclamation. To bring off this re-statement Tillich has used two illuminating sources, the existential philosophy, which he regards, coming at this time, as a piece of luck for Christianity, and modern psychology, not least in relation to *libido* and guilt. But he is also deeply aware of a Christian existentialism, in the Bible, in Job and Ecclesiastes, and in Luther, Pascal and Kierkegaard. He comments, in one of several flashes of lucidity, that 'the biblicistic theologian is right in maintaining that these insights can be found in the Bible . . . the question is not whether something can be found somewhere—but whether a period is ripe for rediscovering a lost truth.' As with Bultmann, one is impressed by the strong hold of traditional Lutheran elements in his mind, not least in his luminous discussion of the relation of Christian freedom to the bondage of the will, and in his refusal to let go the doctrine of justification. On the whole he is careful to define his terms, and it is most important to note that in his constant use of the word 'symbol' he means, not a mere *nuda signa* but something which genuinely participates in the reality it symbolizes. Thus a good deal of what he says about the nature of God, and 'the New Being in Christ' is much more conservative than at first sight appears. The first part of this work deals with sin and the Fall—but in terms of another vocabulary, the division between man's essential and existential state, and the transition from 'dreaming innocence' to 'estrangement.' This estrangement, in which man is at odds with himself, the universe and God, is expounded in terms of man's unbelief, his *hubris* and as 'Concupiscence,' and in individual and collective terms (this last has an acute discussion of the problem of 'collective guilt' in relation to human destiny and man's collective involvement). There follows a sombre and less impressive discussion of what the author calls 'the conflict in the ontological polarities in the state of Estrangement,' in terms of death, finitude, anxiety, suffering, doubt, meaninglessness despair, suicide, the wrath of God, condemnation. To illustrate Tillich does not hesitate to give his own exposition of the Genesis myth, which is often very arbitrary as when he says that 'the serpent represents the dynamic trends of nature.' And this he uses much as a preacher uses sermon illustrations. This is a solemn, impressive diagnosis, and there is no doubt I think that both existentialism and psychology are powerfully used here to diagnose the 'human predicament.'

[1] *Systematic Theology*, ii. (Nisbet; 25s. net).

But there is no hint here of the glory as apart from the misery of man, or of the beauty and wonder of creation, even in estrangement. We miss entirely not a natural theology, but that theology of the natural which must give balance and perspective at this very point, the really vulnerable point of all Protestant theologies since the sixteenth century with which this re-statement might have been expected to cope.

In the second half of the volume, these two external aids are not always so helpful in turning to the problems of Christology and of the New Testament. Is it really true that the agony in the garden simply depicts Jesus as sharing ' anxiety ' in the face of the fact of death ? or that the choice and betrayal of Judas shows that Jesus could make a serious error in judgment ? Is it true that the ' psychological ' explanation of the Resurrection, is, as Tillich asserts ' the easiest and most accepted way of describing the factual element in the Resurrection ? ' None the less this second half, ' The Reality of the Christ,' is the most rewarding, sometimes excitingly rewarding, part of the work. There is an extremely able discussion of the limits and value of historical and Biblical criticism in relation to the Person and religion of Jesus. As I have hinted, the idiosyncratic words, and a vagueness at one or two critical points, drive the author to statements about the finitude of Christ which leads one to wonder whether he has not mutilated the humanity of Jesus by not sufficiently examining the positive content of His perfection. Trying to avoid docetism, he seems to have lost the balance of the New Testament and the Christian tradition about which he generally speaks with admirable restraint. He has an excellent discussion of modern Christological problems but has little fresh to contribute at this point. His own suggestions about the factual content of the Resurrection I find more fantastic than any traditional answers, but at least he does succeed in giving the important impression that what happened on Easter Day may have been something which is not explained by the literalists or those who would psychologize, and I found these paragraphs among the most luminous in the book. The closing discussion of regeneration, justification, sanctification, is important as weaving the experience of believers into the great over all concept of the ' New Being in Christ.' But despite the tribute to Protestant orthodoxy in the matter of justification, the order is significant. One can ask whether any Protestant system which puts regeneration before justification (and that would go for Bucer, Calvin and their followers), has not missed an element of joy and wonder which Luther grasped but few Protestants (including Lutherans) after him.

Tillich in his Preface rightly says that while he welcomes criticism he will not accept criticism of his attempt at re-statement of the Biblical vocabulary. And I think we must agree that this gallant essay is itself its own justification. None the less surely here lies the most pertinent question of all. None of his definitions quite measure up to what they attempt to explain. ' Estrangement ' as Tillich admits, is something less than what the Bible means by ' sin.' ' The Courage to be ' is a good deal less than ' faith,' and so on. There is too much about anxiety and not enough about ' the bruised conscience,' and guilt becomes a psychological rather than a theological concept. The result of this persistent foreshortening is to hover on the verge of a new gnosticism. Marcion tried a gallant demythologizing and re-statement in the second century, but failed because he did not demythologize his own thought world. And perhaps Tillich, like Bultmann, is too imbedded, too wholeheartedly sympathetic towards the twentieth-century myth of existential and psychological theory. This has its warning for our working parson who is brave enough to tackle the job of really doing what this book demands. For he must first learn the Tillichian verbiage, and then go back to the Bible and to the hymn-book and to Christian orthodoxies, and ask where all this illuminates and where it simply sheds darkness on the heights and depths of the Christian revelation. Then he must go on and put what he has learned, old and new, into common speech and intelligible language. The worst horror would be a crop of younger parsons, as there used to be ' Barthians,' who seek to impress and mystify others by using Tillich's language—neat, univocally and unexplained. The best hope is that many preachers will find this book an astringent mental discipline of a most rewarding kind, which will pay dividends in the study and in the pulpit and in the kind of fruitful conversation which goes on in fraternals and study groups in these days. My judgment is that of ten working parsons who make time to read, four can be well advised to read this book. Three will do much better to read Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. The rest will learn more, in words of one syllable, from the Christian existentialism of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Arnold Toynbee's Evaluation of the Place of Christianity in Religious History

By Emeritus Professor J. M. Shaw, D.D., Kingston, Ontario

Recently there was published a work by Professor Arnold J. Toynbee entitled *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, based as the sub-title indicates on the Gifford Lectures delivered in the University of Edinburgh in the years 1952 and 1953. This work, by the greatest historian of our time, forms a kind of sequel to his monumental ten volume *Study of History*. In it he endeavours, as he tells us in a somewhat autobiographical Preface, to make a synoptic evaluation of the whole development of religious history, and asks himself frankly, after his previous voluminous study, What is his personal attitude toward religion and in particular to the Christian religion ?

I

One cannot but be impressed in reading Toynbee's different works with his immense erudition and encyclopædic learning. To apply to him an expressive adjective I once heard Dr. Alexander Whyte of Edinburgh, in conversation, use to characterize the learning and reading of Dr. James Moffatt, for whom he had a warm and admiring regard, his learning and reading was, he said, ' oceanic,' it was wide as the wide-spreading sea. What chiefly distinguishes Toynbee's work as an historian is that by him ' civilizations ' are made the subject of historical study. By previous historians, history was regarded as concerning itself with nations and empires, with states and institutions, while the study of civilizations was left to philosophers and sociologists. But Toynbee has attempted a study of all the civilizations of the world, both of the East and of the West, some twenty-one in number according to his representation, in order to discover the laws that determine their rise and fall and the prospects of civilization in the future. So he may be called the philosopher-historian *par excellence*.

In Toynbee's judgment, religion is the centre force behind all the civilizations of history, and the real progress of history lies in religion. As he put it in his earlier volume of essays entitled *Civilization on Trial*—' Religion after all is the serious business of the human race ' (p. 94) and, as such, religious history should take precedence of economic and political history. In contrast to secular historians Toynbee has learned from the Old Testament prophets and Augustine that history is not an accidental or mechanical process but is the controlled and guided working out of a Divine plan. So Toynbee sharply repudiates the cyclic or encyclical view of history represented by Greek and Indian thought in the ancient world, and by Nietzsche and Spengler in the modern. This view, he says, ' to our mind if taken seriously would reduce history to a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing ' (*ib.*, 14).

II

Three chief varieties of religion he distinguishes in the work before us, three chief varieties or stages of religion in the progressive history of civilizations, namely what he calls ' Nature Worship,' ' Man Worship,' and the ' Worship of the Absolute Reality or God.' The first, ' Nature Worship ' is, he says, by far the oldest and the most deeply rooted variety of religion, elements of which, he claims, still survive even in, what he calls, ' the Higher Religions.' Of the second, ' Man Worship,' there are many different forms, chief among which, he specifies what he calls the collective ' parochial ' form, the collective ' œcumenical ' form, and the individual ' spiritual self-sufficient form,' represented by Buddha, Socrates, and others (pp. 39, 43, 64). Man worship in any of its forms, history shows, according to Toynbee, to be unable to satisfy man's spiritual needs, and is therefore ultimately rejected. The third class Toynbee calls the class of ' Higher Religions,' so-called because they rise above both Nature Worship and Man Worship to the recognition and worship of an Absolute Reality ' that is beyond, as well as in, both Man and Nature ' (p. 37), the Reality usually called God. The chief distinguishing mark of the Higher Religions is, it is interesting to notice Toynbee finds to be, their attitude to suffering, their acceptance of suffering as ' of the essence of life ' (p. 108) not as ' something to be got rid of ' but as, in his words, ' an opportunity for acting on the promptings of Love and Pity ' (p. 89), that Pity and self-sacrificing Love which they believe

' to be divine as well as human, creating and sustaining the Universe and evoking in His creatures an answering love and self-sacrifice ' (p. 108). Such an attitude to suffering, he says, ' makes it possible for the Universe to have significance without at the same time making it necessary for this significance to depend upon the Universe's centering round the Self,' which is ' the disastrous error of all Man worship, whether individual or collective.'

The goal of all the Higher Religions Toynbee thus represents as the seeking of communion or fellowship with the Absolute Reality, with the Presence behind phenomena, and seeking this with the aim of man's overcoming his innate ' self-centredness ' which Toynbee constantly insists is the essence of Original Sin and the root weakness of all civilizations. In the class of Higher Religions Toynbee includes besides Christianity five others, or six others if we count two forms of Buddhism as separate or distinct religions instead of two forms of the same religion, namely Hinayana Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism — the distinction between these two being that in the former the Absolute is represented as impersonal rather than properly personal. These six are Hinduism, Buddhism in its two forms, Judaism, Islam and Zoroastrianism. In the range of the ' Higher Religions ' Christianity, the revelation of God in Christ, is represented as the highest peak, the culminating and most sublime form of religion in history. But while this is so Christianity, the revelation of God in Christ, is not acknowledged to be the final or absolute revelation, in the sense of giving the whole truth about God and His relation to the world and man. Toynbee is suspicious of any claim that God has revealed Himself uniquely and with finality to any one person or people. No one religion by itself, he holds, gives us the whole truth. For this we must include along with Christianity the truth contained in the other Higher Religions of history. ' When the light (from Christ) has shone out into the darkness, the Universe still remains a mystery,' he says (p. 297). ' The heart of so great a mystery cannot ever be reached by following one road only.' So Symmachus, Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, the distinguished Roman orator of the fourth century, is quoted (p. 297) as saying in his controversy with the Emperor Theodosius when he decreed that Christianity should be the sole religion of the Empire. And to this saying, with the appeal for tolerance toward all religions, Toynbee seems to render a full assent. The various Higher Religions, indeed ' every religion in history,' Toynbee claims, has its part to play in helping human souls to enter into communion with the Presence behind phenomena and bring them into harmony with the Absolute Reality. So Toynbee argues for a form of peaceful co-existence between the Higher Religions. Toynbee's conclusion on this point in this work, is, in his own words, that ' the missions of the Higher Religions are not competitive, they are complementary. We can believe in our own religion (Christianity) without having to feel that it is the sole repository of truth. We can love it without having to fear that it is the sole means of salvation ' (p. 298 f.). Indeed to represent Jesus as the sole Saviour of mankind Toynbee regards as an example of what he calls ' parochialism ' and ' self-centredness,' and for Christians to represent God as revealing Himself to one particular people or person in any unique way he regards as a species of what he calls ' self-idolization ' or ' megalomania,' indeed of spiritual ' arrogance ' and ' pride ' (p. 131 ff.).

His conclusion or suggestion apparently is that the hope of the future of civilization must lie in some kind of fusion or amalgam of the world's great religions. As he had already indicated in his earlier, *Study of History* (vol. vii.), neither Christianity nor any other of the Higher Religions is ' an exclusive and definitive revelation of spiritual truth.' It is an error or blasphemy, he claims, to deny that ' other religions may be God's chosen channels for revealing Himself to some human souls.' The different religions are, he says, ' alternative approaches to the One True God . . . offering diverse partial glimpses of an identical Beatific Vision ' (p. 157). ' A time may come,' he says—such apparently is his hope—' when the local heritages of the different historic nations, civilizations and religions will have coalesced into a common heritage of the whole human family.' This time is not yet, but, says Toynbee, ' we are already perhaps within sight of this possibility.'

III

This is what is usually called the syncretistic view of religion. Syncretism in religion has been defined as ' the attempt to formulate a religion acceptable to adherents of all religions by taking the highest and best elements in them all and combining them into something new and fresh.' It is the method which Professor W. E. Hocking of Harvard a few years ago in his famous Laymen's Report on Missions published under the title, *Living Religions and a World of Faith*, called, without identifying himself with the view, the method of ' reconception ' or rethinking of Christianity in relation to other religious faiths. According to this view the absolute or final religion will be a kind of synthesis or fusion of Christian truth with truth in other religions and religious philosophies. This kind of view Toynbee claims is

not really his own peculiar or individual view as a historian but is the proper *religio historici*, 'the glimpse of the Universe,' as he expresses it in the opening chapter of his book, 'that his fellow-historians and he are able to catch through following the historian's professional path' (p. 3).

What we must ask in coming to a critical examination of Toynbee's position, What is the value of such a view? The main test by which the value or worth of religions must be judged, Toynbee acknowledges, is a practical one, namely, the quality or character of the life they create in their adherents. It is the test Jesus Himself laid down. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' He is recorded as having said (Mt 7^{20}). Philosophies it has properly been pointed out can be compared and estimated in accordance with arguments and standards which are purely of the reason or intellect. But such a procedure cannot profitably be followed in the case of religions, seeing that the primary aim of religion is not idea but purposive action, the creation of a certain kind of conduct and of the character that produces that conduct. This is freely and frankly acknowledged by Professor Toynbee. 'The touchstone of a religion,' he says, 'is its comparative success or failure not merely in divining truths and interpreting counsels but also in helping human souls to take these truths to heart and put these counsels into action. The last word has not been said about a religion when we have accepted or rejected its definitions of the nature of Reality and of the true end of Man. We have also to look into the daily lives of its adherents and see how far in practice their religion is helping them to overcome Man's Original Sin of self-centredness' (p. 296 f.). As he puts it again simply and more specifically some sentences further on, 'The practical test of a religion, always and everywhere, is its success or failure in helping human souls to respond to the challenges of Suffering and Sin' (p. 298).

Taken to this test, this proper practical test or criterion, Toynbee acknowledges, Christianity shows itself the highest and best religion in history, the source of the world's renewal and birth, and the focal point for his view of the meaning and purpose of history. Why then does he not frankly and explicitly declare, as it seems he should by his own acknowledged chief test or criterion of religions, that Christianity is not only the highest religion that has yet appeared in history but the highest that can ever appear—the final and absolute religion, which is the traditional view on which the Christian Missionary enterprise of the ages has proceeded, a view based on the conviction thus expressed by Paul that 'there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all' (1 Ti 2^{5}). The conclusion cannot we think be avoided—though time and again the traditional view keeps breaking through as Toynbee's own deepest personal conviction, the conviction of his heart, shall we say, rather than of his mind or reason—that Toynbee's explicitly presented or formulated evaluation of Christianity is determined in the last resort not by a disinterested properly scientific examination of the facts of history but by a philosophic or speculative interpretation of these facts. In other words, that Toynbee shows himself in his judgment or evaluation of Christianity not as the pure historian he claims himself and his fellow-historians to be in affirming the position he does, but rather as a philosopher-historian whose interpretation of history is determined by philosophic or speculative dogmatic preconceptions, preconceptions of an idealistic or rationalistic character with which he comes to a study of the facts and fits them into his preconceived idea of religious history. As a result we are presented with too speculative or rationalistic a rendering of religious history which does less than justice to the uniqueness of Christianity as a religion as it actually appears and manifests itself in history and experience. A true historian's approach to religion, we suggest, must be more historical and less theoretic or speculative than that presented by Toynbee.

The worth or value of Toynbee's appeal as an historian for an attitude of tolerance on the part of Christians towards other religions of history we must acknowledge. The need of such an attitude by way of combating and counteracting the challenge of anti-religious Communism and a too prevalent modern spirit of secularism and materialism is being widely proclaimed to-day—the need, as it is often represented, of presenting a united spiritual front on which all men of sincere religious faith can stand together whatever the origin of their faith may be. It is an attitude supported and furthered by the present-day revival or renaissance of interest in non-Christian religions or cultures, in particular in such ancient Asiatic religions as Hinduism and Buddhism and Confucianism, whose theologies or philosophical ideologies are being subjected to-day to a notable re-study and re-statement. In this connexion and in reference more particularly to Toynbee's vision of 'a world-state with a world-religion' it is noteworthy that such live present-day evangelical leaders of the Church as Bishop Berggrav of Norway and Bishop Newbigin of South India are to-day appealing in view of present world-conditions for a re-thinking and re-statement of the properly Christian attitude toward other world religions, in particular toward the great religious

systems of Asia and Africa—such a re-thinking and re-statement as shall present Christianity in the context not only of Western thought and experience but of the values of religious world history as a whole, Eastern as well as Western.

With all this, however—this praiseworthy, timely stress on the need for religious tolerance and for a more intelligent and informed study and appreciation of other religions, which may be said to be the chief mark or at least an outstanding mark of Toynbee's book—it must be affirmed that Toynbee under the influence of his philosophic preconceptions or *prejudicia*, in particular of his emphasis on truth or idea or rational content as the essence of religion, fails to do justice to Christianity through failing to recognize wherein its real uniqueness as a historic religion consists. It consists not in truths revealed or communicated; this is the intellectualist or rationalist interpretation of Christianity native to the eighteenth century age of the Enlightenment, an interpretation which influenced too much the liberal idealistic view of the first part of the present century. It consists rather in acts or events of history unique and unrepeatable, 'once-for-all' historic events or acts of God based on and consisting in the once-for-allness, the *einmaligkeit* to use the German term, of the work of God in Christ in His incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. These events are unique in history, in the sense not merely of being once-for-all events of past history but also of having unique redemptive consequences in the Christian experience of the ages ever since, and in this sense being not only historical but 'super-historical' and eternal, making Him our 'Eternal Contemporary.'

On the basis of this uniqueness, historical and super-historical, we make the great affirmation and declaration which is the fundamental declaration or *kerygma* of the Christian gospel, that God the Ultimate Reality in the universe is Love, and Love of a certain kind, outgoing, forgiving, redeeming—an affirmation made not on the basis of the general revelation in nature providence and history after the manner of 'natural theology' but primarily and fundamentally on the basis of a unique historical revelation in Jesus Christ with unique continuing consequences in the way just indicated. As the Apostle John expressed it: 'In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him' (1 Jn 4^{9}), and to like effect Paul in his declaration that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them' (2 Co 5^{19}). What, it must be asked, can be added in or grafted on to such a gospel to make it a more adequate or sufficient gospel for such a broken, disunited, sin-ridden and fear-ridden world as ours? What can Hinduism or Buddhism, or Muhammadanism or Confucianism add on to Christianity to make it a more final or absolute religion? Can we have a higher conception of God than we have in the Christian religion? Can we have a more sufficient and final Saviour than we have in the sinless Son of God? Must we not still say of Jesus with Peter, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life' (Jn 6^{68}); and 'there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved' (Ac 4^{12}).

Thou, O Christ, art all I want:
More than all in Thee I find.

Truth, indeed, has been revealed through Christ, truth about God, man and the universe. Christ Himself is recorded by the writer of the Fourth Gospel as saying, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life' (Jn 14^{6}); and, again, 'you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free' (Jn 8^{32}). But when Christ is thus presented as 'the truth' what is referred to is not truth as idea or doctrine. To know Him as 'the truth' is more than to have rational or intellectual or conceptual knowledge of truth or doctrine revealed through Him. It is to be confronted in His Person with Reality, with final Reality, with the Living God indeed incarnate, and through this personal Divine-human confrontation to be indeed saved, made whole and free.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Can and May

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., Ph.D., Alsager, Cheshire

'I may do anything, but everything is not useful.'—1 Co 10^{23} (Phillips).

Fussy fellows, schoolmasters. You know; the maths. master interrupts your progress to make clear on the blackboard some point which you were never in doubt about. You are not quite sure whether he has finished his explanation. So you ask: 'Please, sir, can we go on with the examples now, sir?' An icy voice replies: 'You *may* go on, Bloxwich; but whether you *can* remains to be seen.'

Or you try valiantly to enliven a dull history

lesson by interposing a harmless remark. 'But surely, sir, King John could have refused to sign Magna Carta.' You feel that it hardly deserved the acid reply: 'He *could* have refused, yes. But, Bloxwich, both John and you have to learn that you *may* not do all the things you are physically capable of doing. Take fifty lines for interrupting me.'

Such pedantry makes life rather hard. Surely it does not matter all that much whether I use 'can' or 'may.' But it does, as I learned last week. I was bowling along a brave, wide Shropshire road at an easy fifty-five, when a straggle of houses came in sight, preceded by the thirty miles per hour sign. Like an obedient citizen, I slowed down, though the road stayed wide and inviting. Then, off to the right, I saw a tiny lane about ten feet wide with an abominable surface, winding off into nowhere from the middle of the village. And, bold as brass, two big de-restriction signs shouted, 'Come on, you may go as fast as you like down here.' But the motorist who took that lane at anything more than ten miles per hour was asking for broken springs or a close acquaintance with a hedge. What you may do is by no means the same thing as what you can, and vice versa.

That is what Paul was trying to make clear to the Corinthians. If you were invited to dinner in that pagan city, you could be pretty sure that the meat had been offered in sacrifice to some idol. Of course, as a Christian, you knew that didn't mean a thing. But the snag was that some one else might see you eating and argue, 'That Christian is eating meat offered to an idol. That must mean that he thinks there is no harm in idol-worship,' and so he would be encouraged in his paganism.

People are always watching those of us who profess to belong to Jesus. They set higher standards for us than they do for others. And we ought to be proud that they do. But it means that we have to be scrupulously careful how we act. For instance, I don't think that the eating of an ice-cream on Sunday is likely to upset my digestion any more than on Saturday. But I don't buy ice-creams on Sunday because I believe that Sunday should be a day on which every one can recall our Lord's resurrection in an act of worship. The ice-cream man won't be able to, if he has to keep his shop open to serve folk like me.

I am just as capable as any one else of being jealous, or greedy, or proud. But, as a follower of Jesus, I may not be any of these things without bringing discredit upon Him. Folk will very quickly say, 'Fancy him losing his temper like that. He goes to church, too.'

In 1557 during the unhappy religious wars between France and Spain, the Huguenots were besieged in St. Quentin. Long and valiantly they held out until supplies were almost exhausted. At last, the Spaniards were sure the city would give in. So they shot an arrow which landed in the market place. When the French picked it up, they found stuck in its feathers a piece of paper, containing an imperious demand for the surrender of the city. They brought it to Coligny, the brave captain who was in charge of the defence. He read it, turned the paper over, wrote two words on it, and shot it back into the Spanish camp. They were '*Regem habemus.*'

We, too, have a King. And in His glad service all that we do or say should bring honour to Him.

Snakes and Elephants

By the Reverend William Whittle, Oldbury

Nobody seems to like snakes! I wonder why? But elephants—well some people are quite fond of them and children love to ride a tame one at the zoo. I suppose the reason that we think of them so differently is because you know where you are with an elephant, but you don't with a snake! You can hear an elephant coming, and you can see it a mile off, but a snake is under your foot before you've even caught sight of it.

Of course, an elephant can be very dangerous, especially if it is angry, but you do know where it is! But a snake can be dangerous when you DON'T know where it is. Sometimes they are so marvellously coloured (or camouflaged, as we say) that the only sign you have of their approach is the slight movement of the grass through which they are gliding.

At one time, I was on trek in Ghana and slept on my camp bed in the school, which had mud walls, an earthen floor and thatched roof. When I got up in the morning the carriers were very excited. They had seen a small snake near my camp bed. By this time it had moved to the door, and when I had dressed I walked across to look at it. It was quite small, about as thick as your finger and only two feet long. Tiny black diamond shapes ran along its back, petering out into little dots towards its tail. It had a very small head. It lay quite still until I prodded it with my stick. Then it began to move towards me fairly quickly. The carriers who had been watching me, suddenly fled, shouting that it was a very deadly snake. So I promptly stamped on its head with my heavy boot, and that was the end of it. So small and yet so deadly. I shuddered to think what would have happened if it had taken a snooze in one of my boots during the night! In dealing

with snakes, the best way is to kill at once, unless of course you are collecting them!

You and I may not see many elephants, but there are other things, big things, that can be dangerous; but you know where you are with them; things like gambling, excessive drinking, robbery and violence and you need not be warned so constantly against these things. They are big and you can see them, and their effects in the lives of other people. But there are other things, like the snake, small, secret and slimy which can slide in upon you with no warning at all. And these hidden things, like the snake, are dangerous; some are deadly, like jealousy, deceit, lying and envy. And they have to be dealt with, and quickly. With a snake, you crush its head. Stamp on the evil. Do you remember where the Bible mentions a snake? Look in Genesis chapter 3 and you will find that the way to deal with a serpent is to 'bruise its head.' Hit at the vital part of the evil that threatens you. It is the only way.

The Christian Year

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Restoration of Peter

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. KENT, M.A.,
CATHCART, GLASGOW

'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?'—Jn 21[15].

The Resurrection appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ had more than one objective. Had Jesus intended merely to assure His disciples that He was alive, we might have expected Him to have joined Himself to them and have gone in and out with them just as He had done before. But not so. Instead He appeared to them only on particular occasions and came and went in such mysterious fashion that they never knew when He would be present and when He would be gone. Clearly He was doing something more than proving that death had no dominion over Him. He was educating them to be independent of visible manifestations of His presence. He was preparing them to believe the great truth on which the very existence of the Christian Church depends, and which He later announced in His parting promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'

But His resurrection appearances had a greater significance still. By them He was doing something for His individual friends that only the Risen Christ could accomplish. Especially for Peter. The rehabilitation of the disciple who had denied Him thrice could only have been effected by the Master who could assure him of His ever-living presence.

Peter's case demanded radical treatment. Mere restoration without reformation could not have had lasting effect. His failure had not been the result of a temporary aberration. It was the natural and inevitable consequence of his character. Look at the man and see how impulsive, vacillating and unreliable he was. One moment he was being congratulated for his spiritual perception, the next he was being condemned as the mouthpiece of the devil. One evening he was professing a courageous devotion that would make him lay down his life for his Master; a few hours later he was denying Him.

Peter's nature needed to undergo a change. A mere gesture of kindness, of letting bygones be bygones, could never have altered him. A sublime act of trust, such as has changed some men, could not by itself have made a permanent difference to him. If Peter was to be restored his personality must be reintegrated, rebuilt around a centre of steadfast and unassailable devotion.

And see how Jesus set about His task.

The breakfast on the beach was over. Jesus turned to Peter and said, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?'

Many and diverse have been the attempts to reach the root of Peter's inconstancy. Pride, self-confidence, self-will—these have been the names by which his radical weakness has been labelled. But surely one thing is obvious. Peter was far too conscious of his environment. Before the eyes of some he was elated and became a braggart; in the company of others he quailed and became a coward. Praise and blame profoundly affected him. No one could bear responsibility in the Kingdom of God who was more conscious of others than he was of his devotion to his Lord. Peter had to face it. Was he prepared for this kind of disinterested loyalty? And when he gave his affirmative answer, the first stage in his rehabilitation had been accomplished.

Again the searching gaze of Jesus was turned upon Peter and once more he was forced to look at himself. 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?' 'Look at that affection that you profess to be independent of your interest in other men. Of what nature is it? Does it bear comparison with that love wherewith I love you?' For Jesus had used one word for love and Peter had answered with another. Jesus had spoken of the love that through Him had reached down from God for man's redemption; Peter had spoken of the love that man has for his fellow-man. But Peter was seeing himself as he had never seen himself before. He could not claim any more than he knew to be the truth.

'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' And he stood by the same word. On that bedrock of honesty the second stage in rebuilding Peter's character had been achieved.

A third time Jesus looks at Peter and this time it hurts. 'You claim to love Me as a man loves his brother. Well then examine that love.' For this time Jesus uses Peter's word when asking the question. And, of course, it is important to remember that when Peter answers and says, 'Lord you know everything, you know that I love you,' it is the Risen Lord whom he addresses. This Master who has guaranteed His perpetual presence with His disciples is receiving this pledge of Peter's unswerving devotion. And He is well content. The bond has been established that will prove the remaking of His apostle. Peter's rehabilitation has been made complete.

Such a love is the basis of all discipleship. We ought all to submit ourselves to the same analysis as Peter underwent. On what does our religious profession rest? Is it a genuine and steadfast love of Jesus? Jesus has so much to offer that we confuse acceptance of His gifts with allegiance to Himself. His truth about man and his destiny, we accept that. His surpassing character, we aspire to that. But Jesus Himself! We are not so sure about that. Yet we recognize this as the distinguishing quality of the best Christians whom we know or of whom we have heard. 'As love provokes love,' says Seeley, 'many have found it possible to conceive for Christ such an attachment, a veneration so possessing and absorbing that they have said, 'I live no more but Christ lives in me.' If we see this truth so clearly in others, what about ourselves? The fact is that most of us have to be forced by circumstances or by a discipline like Peter's to rest our sincere affection in the Lord Jesus. But if we believe that Christianity is the revelation of an ultimate Holy Purpose working itself out in the world and in human life, a purpose made known uniquely, finally and indispensably in the Person of Jesus Christ, then loving devotion to Him is the essence of it. Therefore the all important question for each of us to face is 'Lovest thou me?'

Such a love is the guarantee of our character. This love of Jesus has two effects upon us, one positive and the other negative. On the one hand, He inspires us by His virtue and irresistibly conforms us to His own image. In this respect the presence of Jesus is different from that of all other men. Some one has said, 'St. Paul would make most of us feel cowards. Schweitzer would make us feel babes. Wordsworth would make us feel coarse and dull. St. Francis would make us feel sinners. But Jesus would make us feel humble yet full of an infinite hope.' For the only means of attaining the Christ-like life is Christ Himself and a personal attachment to Him. Not that we would ever achieve His perfection but the unmistakable spirit and pattern of His character can be reproduced in those whose lives are centred in His love.

On the other hand this devotion is the protection against temptation. 'The habitual conviction of the presence of God is the sovereign remedy.' This was the defence that Peter needed. No less do we.

This love is the pledge of an expanding service. At each succeeding stage in his rehabilitation, Peter was given increasing responsibility in the Kingdom of God. First the care of the lambs—not too demanding in its call upon spiritual resources; then the guidance of the flock—requiring a greater discernment and understanding; last, the nourishing of the flock—needing all that the love of Christ could supply.

Nothing so tests the Christian's devotion to his Lord as his service to his fellow-men. Let him surrender himself to seeking their good and he is liable to disillusionment and despair. For men tend to be so ungrateful. They are so materialistic in their aspirations, so stubborn in their prejudices and so self-regarding in their motives that you will feel it is quite hopeless to try to lift their eyes and hearts to the spiritual kingdom.

The only security against bitterness and withdrawal is a sincere and settled love of Him who died for all mankind. Our service of our brethren is given not merely for their sake but for Christ's. The greater our love for Him, the more will we spend ourselves for others.

A missionary was saying good-bye the other day to her minister. She was returning to the field after a very pleasant furlough. She confessed that if she was deferring to her own feelings, she would be staying at home. She had very good and praiseworthy reasons for these feelings. 'But,' she said, 'I cannot. I must go. A compulsion is laid upon me that I dare not resist. I suppose it must be the love of Jesus.'

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

God's Requests are His Rewards

BY THE REVEREND GEORGE W. H. LOUDON, B.D., S.T.M., UDDINGSTON

'Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.'—Lk $5^{4.5}$.

If a man wants to understand the background of this incident—to get the feel of it, as we sometimes

say—let him go for a holiday to any fishing village in the West of Scotland. There he can watch the boats go out from the harbour each evening in search of the herring shoals. He will come to understand the bitterness of disappointment, and sometimes worse than disappointment, that can attend a fruitless night's work. If he chances to encounter the crew of a boat that has been out of luck, he will need no telling that they are tired men, irritable men, disappointed men; and he will certainly never dream of choosing such an unhappy moment in which to offer to tell them how their job should be done.

Now that, you see, was precisely the situation of Peter and his mates. They, too, were tired and unhappy and cross. They did not greatly mind that Jesus should have the use of their boat as a kind of floating pulpit—there was no great toil involved in that for themselves, and besides it helped to take their minds off the recollection of their ill-success. But when Jesus suggested that they should go through the whole night's performance again—all the toil of shooting the net, all the weariness and disappointment of seeing it come up again empty—it was too much for them, and Peter spoke the minds of them all when he blurted out his words of protest: 'Sir, we've been out all night as it is, and not a thing to show for it.'

1. And that might well have been the end of the matter. It would have been, had the suggestion come from any one else. But the thing did not end there, because Peter went on speaking. And before he had done, his protest had turned into a promise, 'Since *you* say so, we'll try again.'

One of the Bibles that I sometimes use has this title or column-heading over this story: 'The miraculous draught of fishes'; and I know that on the other side of the argument there are those who would contend quite strenuously that there was nothing miraculous about it. For all the ingenuity of their explanations, such folk seem to me to be missing the point; for I am convinced that there was miracle here, but of another kind. Call it, if you like, the miracle of personality—that at least will serve to show us where we ought to be looking for it—the miracle that can transform a protest into a promise. For it *is* a miracle, that change of mind on Peter's part; and we need not try too closely to analyze it. All we can say is that Jesus had something, has everything, to do with it. It is Peter who makes the protest, and Peter who makes the promise. But it is Jesus who turns the protest into a promise. And by doing so, He sets Peter in the way of making a great discovery, which is that *the requests of God are the rewards of God.*

2. Consider the nature of these requests, as the incident which we are looking at shows them to us. There is first of all the request for a slight and simple service. But once it had been granted—once Jesus had said to the crowds all that He wished to say then—Peter was not straightway released from service. Another request followed close on the heels of the first. And its requirements were steeper and more exacting, and both labour and strain were involved in its fulfilment.

What I want to suggest is that this incident by the lakeside of Galilee has far-reaching consequences in the matter of revealing something of God's ways with men. For it seems to me that we have here a pattern of His continual approach to us. The response to a demand is the means of drawing forth a further demand more searching than the first. The faithful servant finds his services requited by the possibilities of further service that open up before him.

There is, of course, a danger in stating the matter in this fashion. It can so easily be made to look no more than a somewhat elaborate version of the old saying that virtue is its own reward—a commonplace of copy-book morality. And in reality there is so much more to it than that. The reason why God's rewards come in the form of requests is something quite different, and—if the expression may be allowed—something far more colourful. It is that these requests do in fact open up the way to a reward that is beyond our fondest imaginings or our wildest dreams. And I am not thinking—to go back to the incident from which we started—of the great draught of fishes, however miraculous it may have been. Peter's reward did not lie there. It lay in the realization that came to him, and that made him cry out, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.' *His reward lay, not in seeing his net full, but in seeing Jesus more fully.*

3. And that *is* the reward, to which all the requests of God are meant to draw us on. Seeing Jesus more fully—and we can see Him only as we grow like Him: 'we know that we shall be like unto Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' That gives us the reason why God should choose this way of dealing with us, and why our reward should come by way of requests and of demands. We are to be like Christ; and when we look at the record of His earthly life, we see it as a continuing response to the demands that were made upon Him. God lays His requests and His demands upon us in order to mould us into this likeness—to give us, as it were, the same opportunity of response. These are the steps and stages by which He seeks to raise us up, changing us from glory to glory until we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is.

But is it really glory, after all? There are moments when that question must surely suggest itself. To so many, the way of service has been the way of suffering, and to launch out into the deep has meant to run into the storms of distress. And we must admit that it may *not* seem like glory to us now; indeed, we may ask, Why should it? The first intimation that Peter had of *his* reward was a sense of extreme discomfort in the presence of Christ; and it may well be like that for us also. To be lord over many things is always more exacting than to be faithful in few; all the more so since, in the vocabulary of Jesus, 'to be lord' means the same as 'to serve.' But it is glory, none the less; and if we do not see it so, that is because our eyes still need the purifying which a further obedience to His demands will bring.

It took Peter and his fellow-disciples some time before they grasped the truth of this. I think the final dawning of it did not come until that moment when Jesus, knowing that He was come from God and went to God, took water and began to wash their feet. But that is His nature; and into that nature we must grow. If for us to launch out into the deep means some wearying and exhausting task—well, it has been so for all His saints, and for Himself most of all. That is the life to which we have been called, the life to which we have committed ourselves. Its every stage may bring some weariness; its each new task a new sense of how unfit we are. But these stages and tasks are the requests through which the rewards are conveyed. They are the means by which we are made into faithful servants, who are fitted to enter into the presence of their Lord, and to enjoy His joy.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Five Ways of Dealing with Temptation

BY THE REVEREND PRINCIPAL CHARLES S. DUTHIE, D.D., EDINBURGH

'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'—1 Co 10[13].

There is an old saying that while you cannot prevent the crows from flying over your head, you can see to it that they do not build their nests in your hair. That is deeply true of the moral struggle in which we are all engaged. Temptation, whatever form it takes, is quite inescapable because we are moral beings exposed to the prompting of both good and evil. But temptation is not sin: the thought of evil is not the same as evil thought, much less evil action. There are generally three stages in any fall—the stage of desire when eye or mind alights on the coveted object or course of action, the stage of delight when we contemplate or anticipate the pleasure of possession, and finally the stage of consent, when our defences crumble and the will gives in. But it is always open to us to arrest the downward movement at the first or second stage. We can evade. We can resist. We can expel. We can fight and overcome. So long as we do not yield the inner citadel, we are safe.

Temptation is the testing-ground of our manhood. It is the arena in which we have to fight, quite literally, for our lives, the place of our making or unmaking. Thus one of the severest tests of Christian faith is whether it helps us to conquer in the moral struggle. How can we meet our temptations so that we not only prevail against them but can also help others to live victoriously?

1. The first thing, surely, to be said is that *we can do very much to settle the issue beforehand.* What happens in the onset of temptation? We stand revealed as we are. Pretences and superficial goodness are stripped from us. We are reduced to proper size. In such a moment we begin to see that to achieve manhood we must have resources: we suddenly become aware that in order to meet the enemy assault we need to live at ordinary times with the things that have the power to break evil in its first beginnings. We can follow the example of Jesus by so steeping ourselves in the thought and language of the Bible that the great affirmations and promises of Scripture come crashing through to drown the voice of the tempter. We can so set our hearts on goodness and on God that we are antiseptic to evil. We can forge the weapons of victory in the secret places of prayer. If we come to our temptations victoriously we are much more likely to emerge from them victoriously.

2. Then *we can draw strength from the brotherhood of temptation.* When we stand alone, our temptations are magnified and multiplied. We come to think that no one has so much to bear as we have. From this it is but a short step to telling ourselves that little harm will be done if we bend a little before the storm. Part of our problem is knowing how to break out from this disabling sense of solitariness. It helps considerably to remember that we are part of the one battling human race. We can go further and affirm our place in the Christian brotherhood of temptation. Paul with his thorn in the flesh, Bunyan wrestling with his voices, Livingstone in the African jungle, Bonhoeffer striving to maintain his faith in a Nazi

prison—what a host of encouraging witnesses look down on us from the picture-gallery of the Christian centuries! More inspiriting still is the fact that Christ is brother to us in our temptations. He was grateful to His men that they could so far share His battle with Him. 'Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations,' He said to them. What they did so imperfectly for Him He has done fully for us. He fought to the death against evil from within our humanity and by virtue of this experience is able both to understand and to save. This is the Christ who stands by our side in the thick of the spiritual contest.

3. Sometimes, however, we are in jeopardy in temptation before we quite realize what is happening. It is a good thing that Bible incidents like the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife have not been expunged from the record to suit those who are squeamish about facing the dark side of human nature. Joseph did the only thing possible—he turned tail and fled. Whether they be of the flesh or the mind or the spirit—and all temptations are really directed to the central Self—there are some temptations so subtle or alluring or diabolic that to stay to argue with them, to weigh the pros and the cons, to test our strength against theirs is to risk running into disaster. Youth is often tempted to try itself out against the power of evil. We have not yet discovered, when we are young, how fragile and vulnerable even redeemed human nature can be. But there is also a danger of measuring ourselves against temptation in maturer years. It is sometimes when we count ourselves beyond the lure of certain temptations that a sudden crisis finds us without defence. Whether we are young or old, *we have but one safe course with many temptations—we must put the greatest possible distance between them and us in the shortest possible time.*

4. Yet we cannot run away from *all* our temptations. In nine cases out of ten *we must fight the battle out like men, under the eye of God and with the help of God.* Under the eye of God! In the moral struggle there are not two factors only—myself and my temptations: there are three—myself, my temptations and God. When God looks down on me, He sees a man in the making. He does not spare me the battle. But He is interested and concerned and wants me to emerge from the conflict both wiser and stronger. For that reason He is not a mere spectator. He is a participator. We can count on His aid. There is available for each one of us a reinforcement from above that invests the weak will with a strange, new power. The depths of the self are cleansed. We long for real goodness and so turn from evil. Christ sets us free to be what only He can make us.

5. But *the best of all ways of coming through the moral struggle victoriously is to make the very agony of temptation a moment of redemption for those who are much more sorely tempted than we are.* Our trouble often is that we concentrate selfishly on saving ourselves. So long as we are fighting and even praying about our temptations, we allow them to occupy the centre of the stage and thus to continue to exercise their spell upon us. What wisdom in the cry of our Lord, 'Get thee behind me, Satan!' We need to turn our eyes gently but firmly towards God, His grace, His goodness, His peace, His joy, His victory. We can then link this movement towards God with a movement towards others—the man who handles large sums of money, the parent tempted to take his life because his children have been killed in an accident, the woman exposed every day to the loss of her womanhood, races struggling up to the light and lured by the prospect of a future purchased by violence. There is always some one harder pressed than we are. This was what Jesus did. His temptations did not end in the wilderness. They went on with mounting intensity until they reached their climax at the Cross. At the end as at the beginning He was asked to abandon the way of suffering love—if you are the Son of God, come down from the Cross. That was His supreme temptation. How did He meet it? He began to pray immediately for those who had crucified Him and were now taunting Him —'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' So our temptations, by the marvel of intercessory prayer, can become ladders by which others may be helped to climb into the presence of God.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

His Marvellous Light

BY THE REVEREND JAMES MUNN, M.A., GLASGOW

'The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.'—1 Jn 2^8.

This sounds a bold, brash over-statement. It looks like the excited, extravagant optimism of half-fledged youth, gaily unaware of the grim realities of this disordered world.

On the contrary; this is the word of a man held in the grip of sore adversity, carried into exile, bullied in the slave gang; this is the word of an old man looking back on mass killings, deportations, national obliteration. For all this was the experience of John; if any man ever had the right to fling up the sponge and abandon himself to

despair it was John. Yet with that serene faith which can see beyond circumstance this is the man who writes audaciously, 'The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.'

1. *The darkness of a world without God was past.* Life anywhere grows pretty grim when it has lost touch with God. For all its altars to legions of gods and goddesses the world of long ago was baffled about God. These lifeless altars might be garlanded with flowers and drenched with the blood of sacrifice; but they never brought men nearer to knowing God. Plato and Socrates, Buddha and Confucius might ponder and inquire and teach; but the man in the street still carried a darkness in his soul which was never lifted by his own prayers or other men's preachings.

But when Jesus came to Bethlehem God Himself had broken into the blank darkness of the human soul. This was not the advent of a remarkable boy; this was the advent of the living God! This was the dayspring, the herald of the dawn which would defeat the dark. So in years to come Peter said to Him, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God'; the centurion at the Cross cried, 'This was the Son of God'; Paul, the converted Pharisee, wrote, 'God was in Christ'; and John affirmed, 'The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.'

Dark the world in any age if men see not God. But no perplexity can hide Jesus and no disaster destroy Him. After Bethlehem indeed the darkness was past and the true light was shining.

Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near;
O may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

2. *The darkness of men's life in their sins was past.* Where men have lost their ear for God and never listen for Him, where they clutch to their hearts the Divine Right of Things, where nothing matters save only security or supremacy, life is plunged into moral and spiritual mirk, and no brilliance, no success, no applause can dispel that darkness. Sin whispers its invitations, 'Worship gold and be a financial success. Worship power and get your own way. Worship pleasure and make life one long thrill.' But that way life is never filled with glad wholesome light. In *Kidnapped* David Balfour was sent by his scheming uncle to climb an old attic stair in midnight darkness; as he groped his way up, a sudden flash of lightning showed the stair broken off; another step and he would have plunged to death. And that is where sin sends us, to darkness and peril and the fatal step to disaster.

But in that darkness of sin there is a light shining from the Cross. It may seem as far and as faint as a pin-point at an immeasurable distance; but here is the miracle; as soon as we take but one step toward the Cross the light comes to meet us. Swiftly it brightens and grows. For Christ in His death dealt with our sins, and nothing can undo that fact or change its meaning. Here is the forgiveness of God, the cleansing love which remakes us and fills us with endless strength.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Here at Christ's Cross is our forgiveness and our hope; and the darkness is past and the true light now shineth.

3. *The darkness of an empty future is past.* Bertrand Russell claims to be the enlightened leader of modern thought. He has travelled the universities of the world with his philosophy of life to give youth a torch to carry down the years. What is this bracing word? What drum does he beat for the marching feet of this new generation? Listen to him: 'Brief and powerless is man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls, pitiless and dark.' This, of course, is an inevitable conclusion for Bertrand Russell, the only possible end for the human race and individual life. He is bound to reach this sombre, hopeless affirmation because he sets off from a non-religious, non-Christian starting point. For him death draws a black line and beyond that is silence.

But if our eyes are on the Resurrection, if we are convinced that Christ rose, if we open our hearts to His word, 'I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also'; if Christ is the authority on which we build our faith and base our hope, then indeed that darkness of death is also past and the true light now shineth. For when the tired soul wings its way to that country over there, it flies off as a bird with a homing instinct in its breast; and it is not deceived or disappointed.

How can we be sure of this? Because Christ was sure. Because He went and came back to report that all was well. Because we are redeemed not for a few short years but for the joy of eternal love and life. Because He sets eternal life in us here and now, and therefore it carries us to the very audience chamber of God.

Because Christ came, and died, and rose again every darkness is indeed past and the true light now shineth.

Contributions and Comments

The Genitive Absolute in Biblical Greek

THE genitive absolute is a characteristic usage of literary Greek, both classical and Hellenistic.[1] It is notably rare in books of the LXX which are translated from Hebrew, and strikingly frequent in books of the LXX which are free compositions in Greek. For example, in Greek Esdras (Esdras A in LXX) there are eleven instances in nine chapters, whereas in Ezra (Esdras B, chs. 1–10), translated from Hebrew, there is not a single instance. Again, in 1 Maccabees, translated from Hebrew, there are only four instances in sixteen chapters, but in 2 Maccabees, written in literary Greek, there are no fewer than eighty instances in fifteen chapters. The usage is only a little less frequent in 3 Maccabees (twenty-seven in seven chapters) and 4 Maccabees (twenty-one in eighteen chapters), these books also being in literary Greek.

That the genitive absolute is comparatively rare in Greek translated from Hebrew, owing to a close following of the Hebrew paratactical construction, is confirmed in other books of the LXX. The usage nowhere occurs in Ruth, Song of Songs, Amos, Joel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Judith. Its occurrences in other books are: Gn 9, Ex 9, Lv 7, Nu 5, Dt 7, Jos 1, Jg 1, 1 S 7, 2 S 6, 1 K 6, 2 K 6, 1 Ch 2, 2 Ch 3, Ps 4, Pr 8, Ec 1, Sir 1, Job 13, Wis 13, Tob 3, Ep Jer 1, Hos 4, Is 4, Jer 8, Jon 1, Ezk 2, Dn 6.

In the New Testament the statistics are: Mk 29 in narrative, 1 in discourse (4^{17}); Mt 40 in narrative, 9 in discourse; Lk 35 in narrative, 8 in discourse; Ac (1–15) 22 in narrative, 7 in discourse; Ac (16–end), 54 in narrative, 7 in discourse; Jn 12 (all in narrative); Epistles 44 (Ro 8, 1 Co 4, 2 Co 7, 1 Th 1, Gal 1, Heb 13, 1 P 6, 2 P 3, 3 Jn 1, the rest 0). In the Apocalypse, which 'is more Hebraic than the LXX itself,'[2] there is no instance.

It is at once apparent that, the Apocalypse apart, the Greek of the New Testament generally resembles the non-translated more than the translated books of the LXX. From this point of view, translation from Aramaic seems unlikely in the Gospels except in parts of discourse where the Semitic paratactic construction is noticeable. Acts, apart from quotations from the LXX and occasional imitations of the LXX style, is definitely literary Greek, if judged by the frequency of its genitive absolutes. The comparative paucity of the construction in the Pauline Epistles may be explained partly by the Semitic cast of Paul's mind, partly by the fact that the genitive absolute is more suited to the Greek of narrative or rhetoric than to the Greek of real letters. There is a notable contrast in the rhetorical Greek of Hebrews, which contains more than half as many instances as all the Pauline Epistles put together.

While the frequent occurrence of the genitive absolute renders a Semitic original unlikely, the absence of it does not necessarily indicate translation from Aramaic. There is no instance in James, but it is clearly a Greek epistle (for example, 1^{17} contains a Greek hexameter, 3^{6} an Orphic phrase, 'wheel of birth,' and 4^{1} an allusion to Plato, *Phaedo*, 66c). On the other hand, the complete absence of the genitive absolute from so long a work as the Apocalypse is probably due to the Semitic character of the book. A. W. ARGYLE

Regent's Park College, Oxford

[1] Its use is more lax in Hellenistic than in classical Greek, where generally the noun or pronoun in a genitive absolute is not allowed (as it often is in Hellenistic Greek) to refer to the same person or thing as the subject or object of the clause on which it depends. Rarely in Biblical Greek, but frequently in papyri, a participle stands by itself in genitive absolute without a noun or pronoun in agreement: for example, 1 Ch 17^{24}, Mt 17^{14}, Ac 21^{31}.

[2] R. H. Charles, *Revelation* [I.C.C.], pp. i, cxliv.

A Note on 1 Thessalonians iv. 15, 17

PÈRE RIGAUX, in his recent commentary on 1 Thessalonians in *Études Bibliques*, has given the weight of his authority to the commonly held view that in this passage Paul is asserting his belief that he will be among those who remain alive until the Parousia, whereas he has given up this expectation by the time that he came to write, for example, 2 Co 5. He regards the contention of Vosté and others that Paul is merely quoting without correcting a slogan of the Thessalonians themselves, as due to anxiety to save the Apostle from error. But a closer examination of the context perhaps suggests that there is more in this view than Rigaux is prepared to allow, and that whatever other grounds there may be for supposing that Paul's doctrine underwent modification during the course of his ministry, the wording of this passage does nothing to support them.

On the face of it, 'We that are alive and remain . . .' seems to put the matter beyond cavil, but it is significant that the phrase reappears in identical words in *v.* 17. Furthermore, the Apostle Paul was not addicted to otiose repetition, and when we think that his meaning is naïvely patent, it is more than probable that we have not understood it. Is it really the case that he is

making here a repeated assertion of something that he certainly regarded as open to doubt, in this matter of survival until the Parousia ? In 5^2 he shows that he shared his Master's ignorance about the time of the Second Coming ; it will be like a thief in the night, no man knows when. If, then, the received interpretation is correct, Paul must be regarded as contradicting himself within a few verses in the most blatant manner.

But what follows if Paul is not speaking ingenuously about his personal hopes in this context ? It is clear that there were people at Thessalonica, where eschatological expectation had become very unbalanced, who thought that those who remained until the coming of the Lord would in some way get the advantage over those Christians who had died. A view such as this would cause the twin though opposite results of grief and arrogance ; grief to those who had lost dear ones, and arrogance in the circles of the enthusiasts who were confident of the imminence of the Parousia and their consequent advantage. And may it not be that it was to meet both these needs that the Apostle wrote the passage before us ? He writes to Christians who are worried about the state of those who have passed on, and assures them that there is no cause for dismay ; ' comfort one another with these words ' is the conclusion of the paragraph. But he also writes to Christians who pride themselves upon their presumed survival till the Parousia, upon their good fortune in being able to *phthanein tous koimethentas*, and he seeks to disabuse them of the idea. Far from it being true that those who are alive at the Second Coming will, as it were, steal a march on those who have died, the very opposite is the case. The dead in Christ shall rise *first*, and only then shall ' we who are alive and remain ' be caught up together with them and meet the Lord in the air.

On this interpretation, the studied repetition of the phrase ' we which are alive and remain ' is used by the Apostle to rebut the proud boast of a section of the Thessalonians who anticipated getting the advantage over their brothers who had died. In order to do this, he allies himself, almost ironically, with their outrageous claims, only to reverse with devastating effectiveness their ideas of priority. This use of the phraseology of his opponents is characteristic of Paul's pastoral technique. It is widely recognized in the terminology of Colossians, where words like *aparche, pleroma, auxanesthai kai karpophorein, apokruphoi* and others appear to be taken over by Paul and thrown back, charged with new meaning. We see the same process, in all probability, in Ro 15^1, where he says *hemeis hoi dunatoi opheilomen bastazein ta asthenemata tōn adunatōn.* It seems highly probable that the terms *dunatoi* and *astheneis* were being bandied about in Rome as at Corinth. And in connexion with the latter Paul says (1 Co 8^1) ' We know that we all have *gnosis.*' Can we really suppose that these remarks are to be taken at their face value, and are not rather barbed shafts designed to pierce the arrogance of a section of the church ? [1]

It may well be, therefore, that Paul is not in these verses making a naïve assertion about his personal expectations of survival which he later had to revise, but rather directing a highly polemical thrust at those who did make such an assertion in Thessalonica, and drew from it the erroneous conclusion that they would gain an advantage over those who had predeceased them. And if this is so, it follows that we shall not be justified in using this passage as evidence of a change in St. Paul's teaching about his personal state at the Parousia. His terminology is wholly conditioned by the Church situation in Thessalonica.[2]

E. M. B. Green
Holy Trinity, Eastbourne

[1] See H. Chadwick, ' All Things to All Men,' in *New Testament Studies*, ii. [May, 1955].

[2] It may be urged that in 1 Co 15^{52} Paul is guilty of making the same mistake as the received interpretation attributes to him here, and there, moreover, no polemical aim seems to be intended. But this can hardly be maintained, since in 1 Co 6^{14} Paul includes himself among those to be raised. The meaning of ' we shall be changed ' is that believers alive at the time of the Parousia, with whom he contingently associates himself, will be changed. It would be most unnatural for him, while alive, to include himself among the other category. Indeed to rank himself among the dead would be to say that the Advent would not happen until after his death, which would be to some extent to fix its date. And this Paul resolutely and repeatedly refused to do.

Recent Foreign Theology

Louvain Studies. The series of studies issued under the title *Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica et Orientalia* finds frequent mention in these columns. Three recent issues have come to hand. The first is from the unresting pen of Canon Coppens, and is a review of recent Pauline studies.[1] The author finds that these studies mark real progress, and bring into clearer relief the person and teaching of the Apostle, and emphasize his fidelity to the primitive Christian community and to Jesus,

[1] *L'État présent des études pauliniennes* [1956]. Desclée de Brouwer, Bruges ; Belgian Fr. 15.

Nevertheless he desiderates more attention to literary questions.

The second of our issues is by J. Ries and it reviews four centuries of research on the Manichees.[1] Much patient research has gone into the preparation of this monograph, which will be valued by all who are interested in this question. The author traverses the works of the older writers, who utilized the writings of the Fathers, but who had no access to the Manichees from within, and who treated the subject as a matter of Protestant-Catholic propaganda—the Roman writers seeking to link Protestantism with Manicheeism—and then reaches the eighteenth century, when more objective critical studies on the basis of material then accessible were written. A continuation of this study, bringing it down to the present century, in which new sources have come to light, is to be expected.

[1] *Introduction aux études manichéennes : Quatre siècles de recherches* [1957]. Belgian Fr. 50.

The third issue is again from Canon Coppens's pen, and it contains four separate studies.[2] The first and longest treats of the doctrine of the Eucharist ; the second continues some previous studies of the author on the sexual interpretation of the sin of Paradise ; the third cites some passages on the Essenes from Caius Iulius Solinus and Joseppus, both rarely remembered writers, and both of interest in view of the revived interest in the Essenes, due to the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls ; while the fourth cites Joseppus's interpretation of the Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah. This last interpretation is that Immanuel was the child of Isaiah himself, and that while there is no direct reference to the Messiah, there is an indirect reference, since the child was given to Isaiah through prophecy.

H. H. Rowley
Manchester University

[2] *Miscellanées bibliques* [1957]. Belgian Fr. 30.

Entre Nous

The Proper Study of Mankind

Pope was right when he said :

The proper study of mankind is man.

He was but saying what the great Greeks had said long ago—' Know thyself.' Mr. E. H. Robertson has written a fascinating book, called *Man's Estimate of Man* (S.C.M. ; 8s. 6d. net), which is a book about man, and therefore a book about each person who will read it.

Man begins as a paradox. As Goethe had it in *Faust* :

Two souls, alas, are housed within my breast,
And each will wrestle for the mastery there.

Man is ' a sinner made in the image of God.' For that very reason his sin is all the more serious, ' for the sin of a good man is more serious than that of an evil man.' And also for that very reason ' man's true greatness lies, not in what he is, but in what he is becoming.' But man has to face a paradox, not only in his personal relationships with himself, but also in his relationship to the world. He is part of the world, and therefore he is on the way to death. But at the same time he is apart from the world, and can stand back and look at the world and death and himself, like H. G. Wells' mathematician who plotted the exact course of the wandering star which was going to disintegrate the world. He calculated the very moment of contact and destruction, and, therefore, although the star would destroy him, he was none the less greater than the star. Man is ' a clod of earth, a wing of heaven.'

Happiness, satisfaction, completeness are clearly going to be difficult for so paradoxical a situation. The matter is even further complicated by the fact that even man's religion can present him with a paradox. He will be told that all is of grace, and that the reign of law is over ; and yet he will be told that there is a moral law which he breaks at his peril ; and he may find the wrong way out by perverting grace, and denying all validity to the ethical law.

He will be offered various ways out of his dilemma. The Freudian will tell him that the *ego* is under three pressures. There is the *id*, which consists of the powerful, primitive urges of the unconscious, implanted there by personal and racial experience—and always directed towards the pleasure principle, of which the most powerful force is sex. There is the pressure of the laws and rules of the society in which he lives. And there is ' the arch-villain of the piece,' the *super-ego*, which is what the Christian would call conscience, and which erects prohibitions against the free expression of the *id*. The Freudian solution is to destroy the *super-ego*, and therefore to destroy the validity of ethical standard altogether.

There is the way of the existentialist. For him ' man is not classified, he is observed.' In life there is a weariness, a fog, an abyss of existence, an utter indifference. There are no standards ; life is to be accepted as reality as it is in the individual experience.

There are in the life of man three fears, which need three courages to meet them, as Tillich has pointed out. There is *the fear of fate and death.*

Die we must; and if we are not to think of ourselves as the victims of some soulless and ongoing machine, we must have the courage to lose ourselves, and to identify ourselves with something and some one larger and bigger than ourselves, something and some one who transcend fate and death. The grain of wheat has to die to live; the life has to be lost to be found. There is *the fear of emptiness and loss of meaning*. Phenomena like Mau Mau and the teddy-boy are the result of the total loss of one culture and one anchor, before any other culture and any other anchor have been found. They are the desire for self-affirmation in a meaningless world. To meet the meaninglessness 'one of the functions of the Church in an impersonal society is to show that each member is an irreplaceable child of God, and that what he does day by day has eternal significance.' There is *the fear of guilt and condemnation*. The Christian message says in effect: 'You do well to reject yourself.' It says: 'If you are bad in your own eyes, you are worse in the eyes of God.' And then, finally, it says that it is the wonder of grace that God wants us as we are. 'Depart from me,' says Peter, 'for I am a sinful man.' Jesus in effect answers: 'I know—that's why I want you.'

Man is faced with three ways. He can seek to lose himself in God. But only strong men can walk that way, for mysticism tends to subjectivism and many of the greatest mystics have died heretics. There is the way of encounter in which a man tries to discover God. But the quest for knowledge tends to make devotion difficult. 'It is much more difficult to pray to the "Chalcedonian Definition" or the "Logos Doctrine" than to "Jesus, my Jesus".' Finally, there is the way of simple acceptance. A man has to accept the amazing fact that 'forgiveness without reason matched sin without excuse.' In the end all a man can do is take.

Mr. Robertson has brought to the writing of this book wide theological knowledge, penetrating insight into human nature, and a glowing devotion —a rare combination which results in a rare book.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

C. R. B. Shapland

Faithful Sayings (Epworth Press) is a selection from the sermons of the Rev. C. R. B. Shapland. We owe the volume to his friend, the Rev. J. Y. Muckle of Hartley Victoria College, who has also written a brief memoir. C. R. B. Shapland was the son of a distinguished minister of the United Methodist Church. He had himself outstanding intellectual gifts—he entered Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1924 and in 1928 took a First in the Classical Tripos.

The seventeen sermons that Mr. Muckle has chosen as characteristic make a slim little book, but it is well worth the 8s. 6d. The sermons have something that lifts them out of the ordinary. Take the man with the one talent—the 'man with the inferiority complex.' He 'makes a hole in the ground and wraps up the money to keep it clean. "It isn't reasonable to ask me to do anything with this. . . ." How true to life that is, that the one-talent man buries his money, and not one of the others! Five Talents and Ten Talents sometimes waste their equipment—the brilliant man and the able man sometimes misuse the splendid endowment given them—but it is the man with the inferiority complex who buries. He says: ". . . I am just going to . . . keep in the background. I shall not do any harm; I shall not be in anybody's way." . . . It looks like humility. . . . In reality it is perverted pride.

'The day of reckoning comes. He brings out the talent just as he received it. And he receives the terrible answer: "Wicked and slothful servant. . . ."

'For God does not desire innocence; He desires achievement. The question is not, Have you kept life clean? but, what have you done with it? Many people make a fatal mistake about this reckoning with God. If only they can keep away from the gross sins! If only they can keep their consciences tolerably white! That is all that matters. And so they wrap their souls up. They never try to develop them. They never pray. They never serve. They never worship. And at the end they hope to say: "I've been good. I've not done any harm. Here is the life You gave me, much as it was when I received it."—"You wicked and slothful servant. . . . I gave you a heart to love Me. I gave you a tongue to praise Me. I gave you hands to serve Me. What have you done with life?"'

D. L. Moody

The Moody Bible Institute, 820 North La Salle Street, Chicago 10, is gathering historical material relating to D. L. Moody and would like original letters, photographs, or clippings concerning Moody's evangelistic work in the British Isles—he made several extended visits here between 1867 and 1892. They would be specially glad of personal recollections of any who heard D. L. Moody in any of his meetings. Between 9th June and 22nd August, '58 correspondence should be sent to Dr. J. C. Macaulay, c/o J. R. Howard, Eresby House, Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7.

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